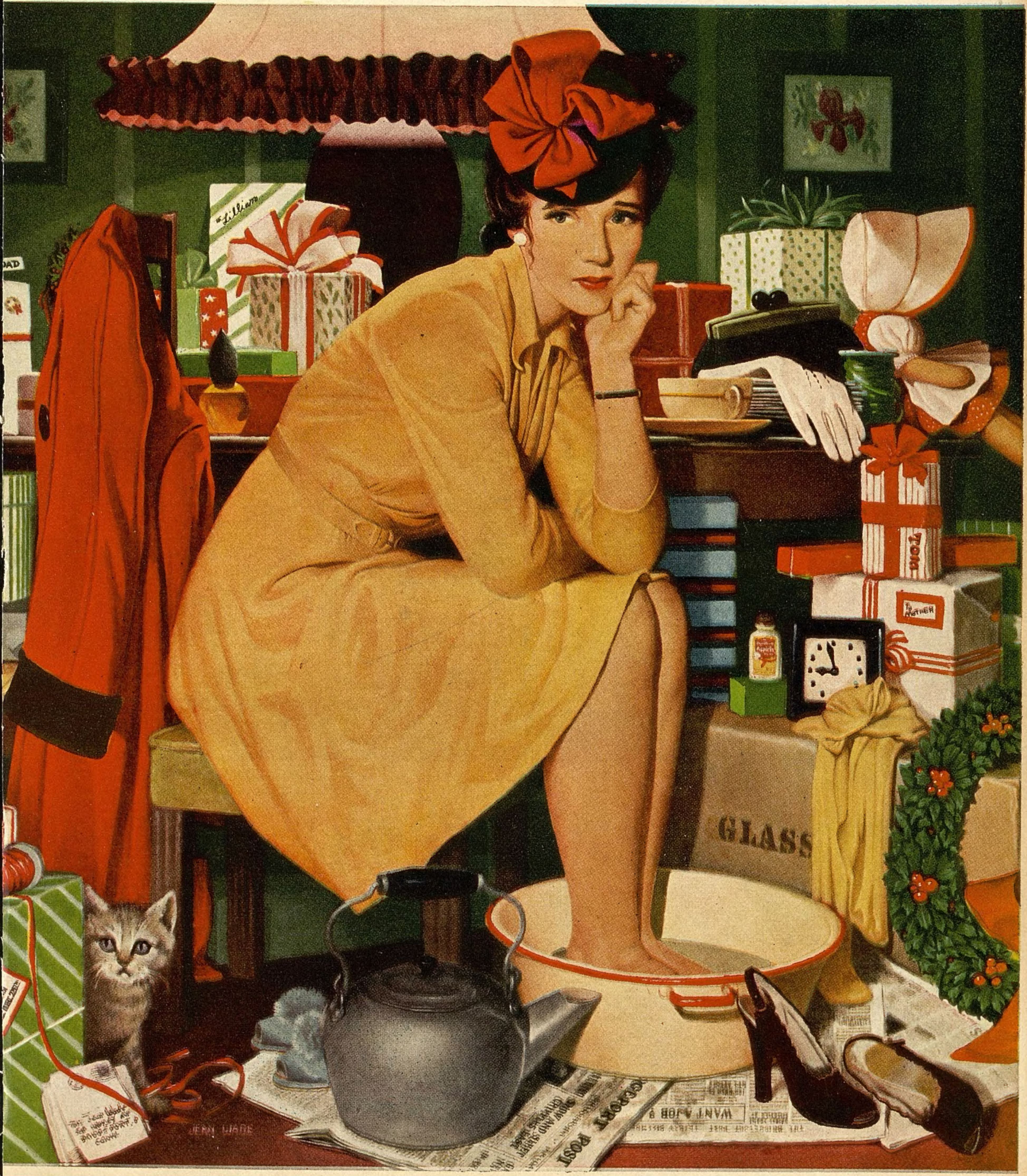
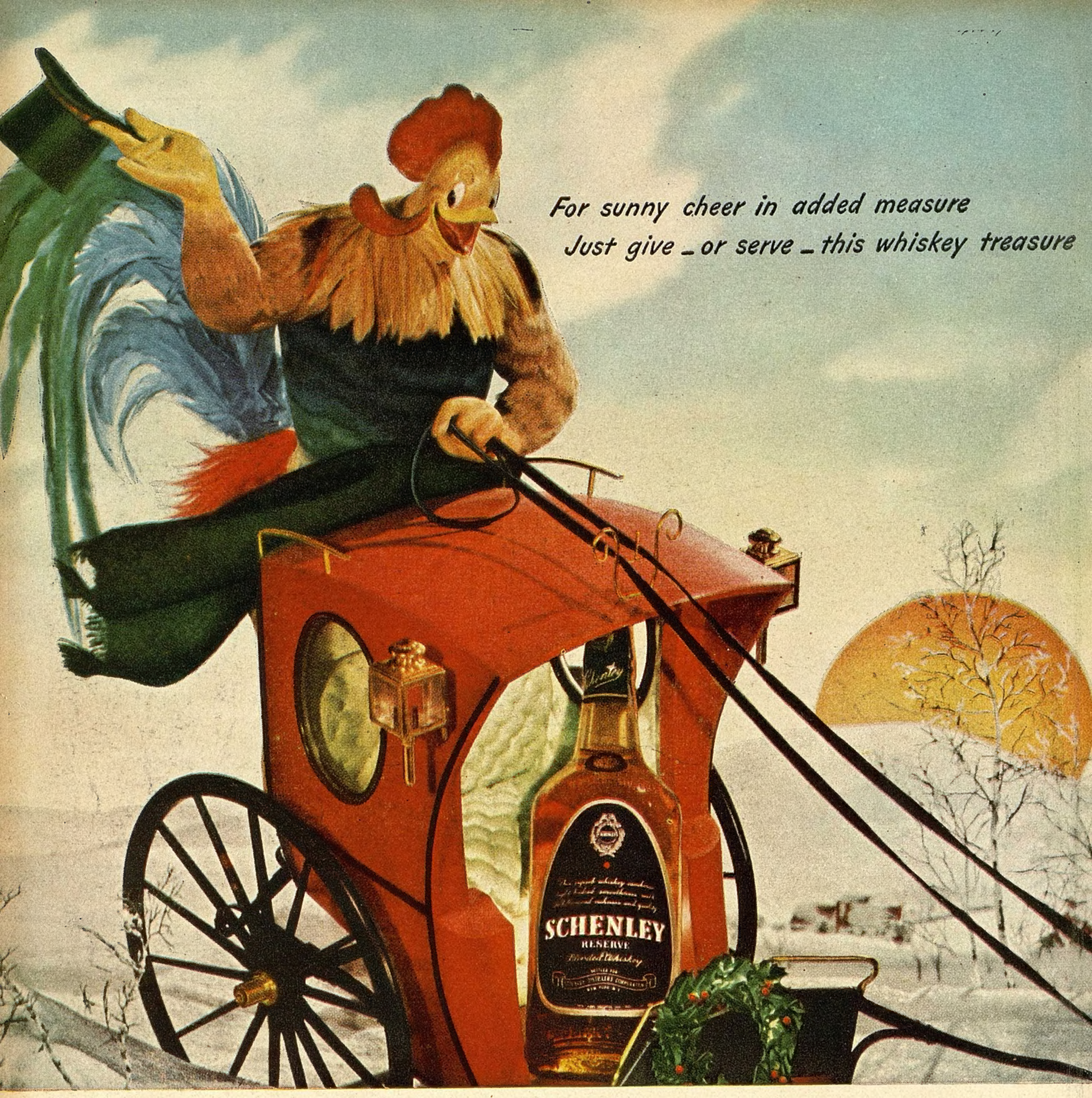
Liberty

DEC. 21, 1946 10c

BEGINNING: UNTIL MOONRISE
BY URSULA PARROTT

Book: SIX CURTAINS FOR NATASHA
Mad Novel of the Russian Ballet


Lilliam
DAD
TOM
To Mother
GLASS
SNOW AND SLEET
POST
JEAN WADE


For sunny cheer in added measure
Just give – or serve – this whiskey treasure
SCHENLEY
RESERVE

There's a wealth o' cheer in its Sunny Morning Flavor

Festive occasions and Schenley Reserve *belong* together, because they're both special! Schenley Reserve's Sunny Morning flavor brings a *special*...an *extra* measure of enjoyment. *Taste* why Schenley Reserve is far and away America's favorite!

PRE-WAR
QUALITY

SCHENLEY
RESERVE

BLENDED WHISKEY 86 PROOF. 65% GRAIN NEUTRAL SPIRITS. COPR. 1946, SCHENLEY DISTILLERS CORP., N. Y. C.

Secret life of a "teen-age" fashion model

Few readers of *Junior Bazaar* would suspect that Kitty Higgins has two daughters!

Prettiest tree in all New Jersey! 5-year-old Kate and 2-year-old "Mike" think so (even if father Jim Higgins does look slightly skeptical). But there's not much question that they will have two of the prettiest *smiles.* For Kitty is teaching them to massage their gums gently when they brush their teeth. This brief workout with Ipana helps make gums firmer . . . teeth brighter . . . smiles more sparkling.

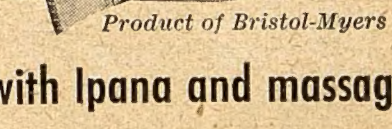
PEDAL PUSHERS . . . beanies . . . jumpers . . . these are some of the things that Kitty Higgins models for *Junior Bazaar.* Nothing so remarkable about that—except Kitty has a daughter almost old enough to wear them!

Not only her slight build (she's 5′4″, weighs 110), but her flashing little-girl smile keeps this "model" mother looking more like a college freshman than mother. But model mother she is. To make certain that daughters Kate and "Mike" have smiles as bright as her own, she's teaching them her own prized dental routine: *Regular brushing with Ipana, then gentle gum massage.*

Children know better than parents the importance of gum massage, taught in thousands of classrooms. Ask your dentist about massage for *your* gums. Follow his advice. Nationwide survey shows that 7 out of 10 dentists recommend gum massage.

Page-boy bobs are favored by Mrs. and Miss Higgins. Just as they prefer Ipana for care of teeth and gums. Sensitive gums, "pink tooth brush," mean *see your dentist.* Let *him* decide whether yours is a case for "the helpful stimulation of Ipana and massage."

What's wrong with this picture? Kitty forgot to paint Kate's smile! But she doesn't neglect it in everyday life. Knowing that today's soft foods rob gums of exercise, Kitty sees to it that her family uses Ipana—specially designed, with gentle massage, to help gums to healthier firmness.



Product of Bristol-Myers

Firmer gums—brighter teeth with Ipana and massage

Your line is divine... how's your 6NX APPEAL
DOUBLE EDGE 4 for 10¢
MADE BY 6NX PROCESS
SINGLE EDGE 4 for 10¢
STAR DOUBLE EDGE BLADES
STAR
Famous Since 1880
MADE IN U.S.A.
Single Edge STAR BLADES
STAR
STAR BLADES

6NX APPEAL IS CHEEK-APPEAL . . . the smooth approach assured by Star's exclusive 6NX Process. Star Double Edge Blades are Science's answer to "Why do some guys have all the luck?" 6NX sharp, 6NX long lasting Star Blades will give your double edge razor a *keener* sense of duty!

SINGLE EDGE RAZORS need Star Single Edge Blades. Billions of shaves, by millions of men, have *proved* them!

Star Division, American Safety Razor Corp., B'klyn 1, N. Y.

THE WORLD TODAY IN FACT AND FICTION

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Painted by Jean Wade

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is enriched with Technicolor magic... told in melodies you have always loved... attuned to the heartbeat of our time!

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SWANEE
YOU MADE ME LOVE YOU
MAMMY
WAITING FOR THE ROBERT E. LEE
APRIL SHOWERS
I WANT A GIRL
RAINBOW 'ROUND MY SHOULDER
LIZA
ROCKABYE YOUR BABY
BY THE LIGHT OF THE SILV'RY MOON
ABOUT A QUARTER TO NINE
I'M SITTING ON TOP OF THE WORLD
TOOT, TOOT, TOOTSIE

with LARRY PARKS · EVELYN KEYES · William Demarest · Bill Goodwin
Screenplay by Stephen Longstreet · Produced by SIDNEY SKOLSKY · Directed by ALFRED E. GREEN
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★ VOX POP ★

"The Voice of the People"

PREMATURE

Chippewa Falls, Wis.—I would like to criticize Ted Shane, who refers to October 30 as Halloween in his otherwise excellent article about Orson Welles—Awesome Orson (November 2). Since the feast of All hallows is always on November 1, Halloween must always fall on October 31.—*Larry Kuechenmeister.*

ORIENTATION

Pittsburgh, Pa.—After reading Senator Owen Brewster's Is Scandal Brewing in Germany? (November 9), I just can't resist the urge to drag out the old typewriter.

True, the American soldier is not basically brutal or cruel. But upon entering the army, he was shown countless orientation films depicting the German people as inhuman, murdering fanatics. Lectures were given, books written, and newspapers loaded with column after column of food for the hatred campaign. The moral, kind American citizen was thereby turned into a German-hating, gun-totin', two-fisted, swearing, drinking, fighting man.

That is the problem which threatens to destroy the aim of our occupation. It can be solved the same way that it was created. An intensive orientation program should be instituted, stressing the purposes of our occupation—not only to keep the enemy from ever starting another war because we've got a gun in his ribs, but by setting an example for him in good behavior and fair but firm treatment.—*Martin Marks.*

According to the War Department, such a program is under way.—Vox Pop Editor.

WRONG ACTRESS

Chicago, Ill.—John Maloney's article about the filming of The Yearling, "Them Hollywood Nuts," November 16) is one of the best movie pieces you've had in a long time. But please try to be accurate about your facts, will you? According to the advertisements put out by M-G-M (who ought to know, since they made the picture), Jane Wyman— and not Jacqueline White—plays th role of the mother.—*Rose R.*

As of the period covered by the article, ou facts were correct. But thanks anyway fo pointing this out.—Vox Pop Editor.

ARMY LOOKOUT

Denver, Colo.—In the November issue I saw your excellent picture o Louis Unser in his Maserati (Italian-built race car) cornering on th fourteen-mile point of Pikes Peak The soldier on guard, for your in formation, is a member of a platoo sent from Camp Carson, Colorado, t control traffic and form lookout post connected by radio during the race —*Otto Werlin.*

NOSTALGIA

Cumberland, Md.—Your Octobe 19 cover picturing the burning o autumn leaves was lovely.

How it reminds us oldsters of th fun we had raking and burnin leaves in those late fall days when w were young!—*Martha Ann Brady.*

GRUESOME GREGORY

New York, N. Y.—If you mu move into the territory of the movi magazines, do you have to get suc gruesome kodachromes as that pi ture of Gregory Peck on the Noven ber 16 cover? The guy looks as he could do with a bath and a goo shave.—*Theodore Rager.*

What do the women think?—Vox P Editor.

WHO'S FLOUNDERING?

Miami, Fla.—Paul Hunter's wor in his editorial, Why America Flou ders (November 9) are certain sweetened by complacency over t cost of living. He reasons, in effe that doubling the price of butter immaterial, since we then get alo on only half as much. Thence l leaps airily to the contention th governments cannot successful "regulate the complex mechanism b which we make our living." Canada and Britain seem to have done so very nicely and avoided inflation. America may be floundering, but so is Mr. Hunter.—*John Bacon.*

UMPIRE

DURANT, IA.—To the Vox Pop Editor who comments in his column (November 2): "Shall government be our servant or master?" I say neither! Government is the *umpire* to see that everybody plays fair! —*Mrs. Lillie Mumm.*

INSOMNIA RESEARCH

LOS ANGELES, CALIF.—I would have made good research material for Albert Q. Maisel in his article, How to Fall Asleep (November 2).

I have had insomnia for twenty-five years. I have read dull books, taken ovaltine, warm baths, hot milk, and long walks. I have counted sheep, played golf in bed, done relaxing exercises, read a book on how to sleep, gone to the Mayo Foundation at Rochester, named all the capitals, cut out salt. Even sleeping capsules have lost their effect.

NOW STUN ME
F.C.

My latest attempt is to drink a bottle of ale half an hour before bedtime and just before bed eat a quarter of a slice of cheese, half a slice of salami. Believe it or not, it puts me to sleep.—*Lester B. Schwimmer.*

COTTEN FANS

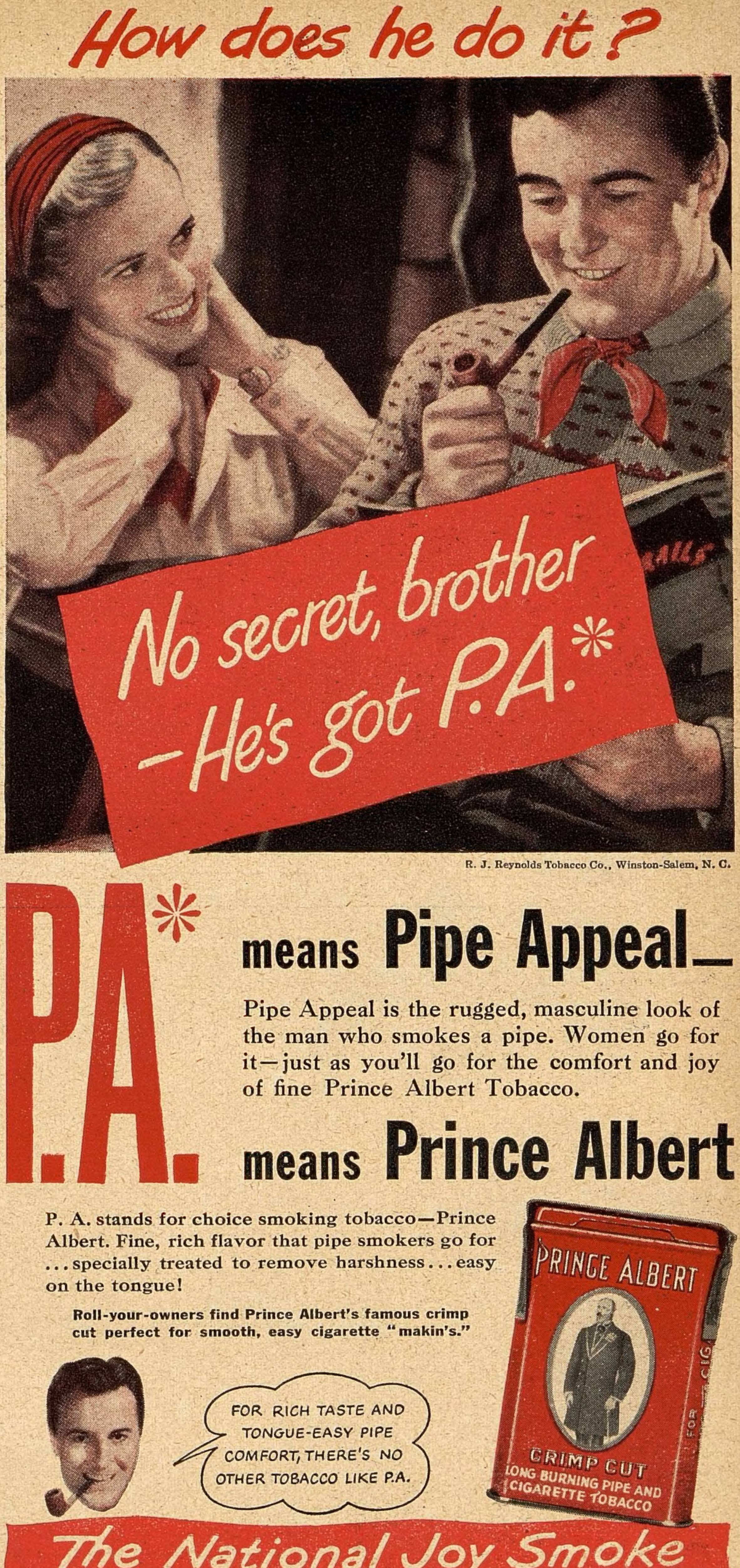
BOTHELL, WASH.—Thanks for the fine article on Joseph Cotten by Alyce Canfield (Oct. 26).

As long-time admirers of Mr. Cotten's acting ability, we appreciate any article we read about him. And yours was extremely interesting. —*Lt. and Mrs. M. Scott.*

TREACHERY

OXNARD, CALIF.—M. G. C. openly suggests in Vox Pop (November 2) that the press use space to propagandize readers to abandon their allegiance to the United States and hand over the country's precious sovereign rights to a greater world authority. If that isn't pure treachery, I don't know what is.

There was greed, avarice, deception, and strife clear back to the beginning of the Bible. Why should we think or expect that a super-order would correct these age-old vices? —*Bernice M. Gower.*


How does he do it?

No secret, brother —He's got P.A.*

R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., Winston-Salem, N. C.

P.A.* means Pipe Appeal—

Pipe Appeal is the rugged, masculine look of the man who smokes a pipe. Women go for it—just as you'll go for the comfort and joy of fine Prince Albert Tobacco.

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P. A. stands for choice smoking tobacco—Prince Albert. Fine, rich flavor that pipe smokers go for ... specially treated to remove harshness ... easy on the tongue!

Roll-your-owners find Prince Albert's famous crimp cut perfect for smooth, easy cigarette "makin's."

FOR RICH TASTE AND TONGUE-EASY PIPE COMFORT, THERE'S NO OTHER TOBACCO LIKE P.A.

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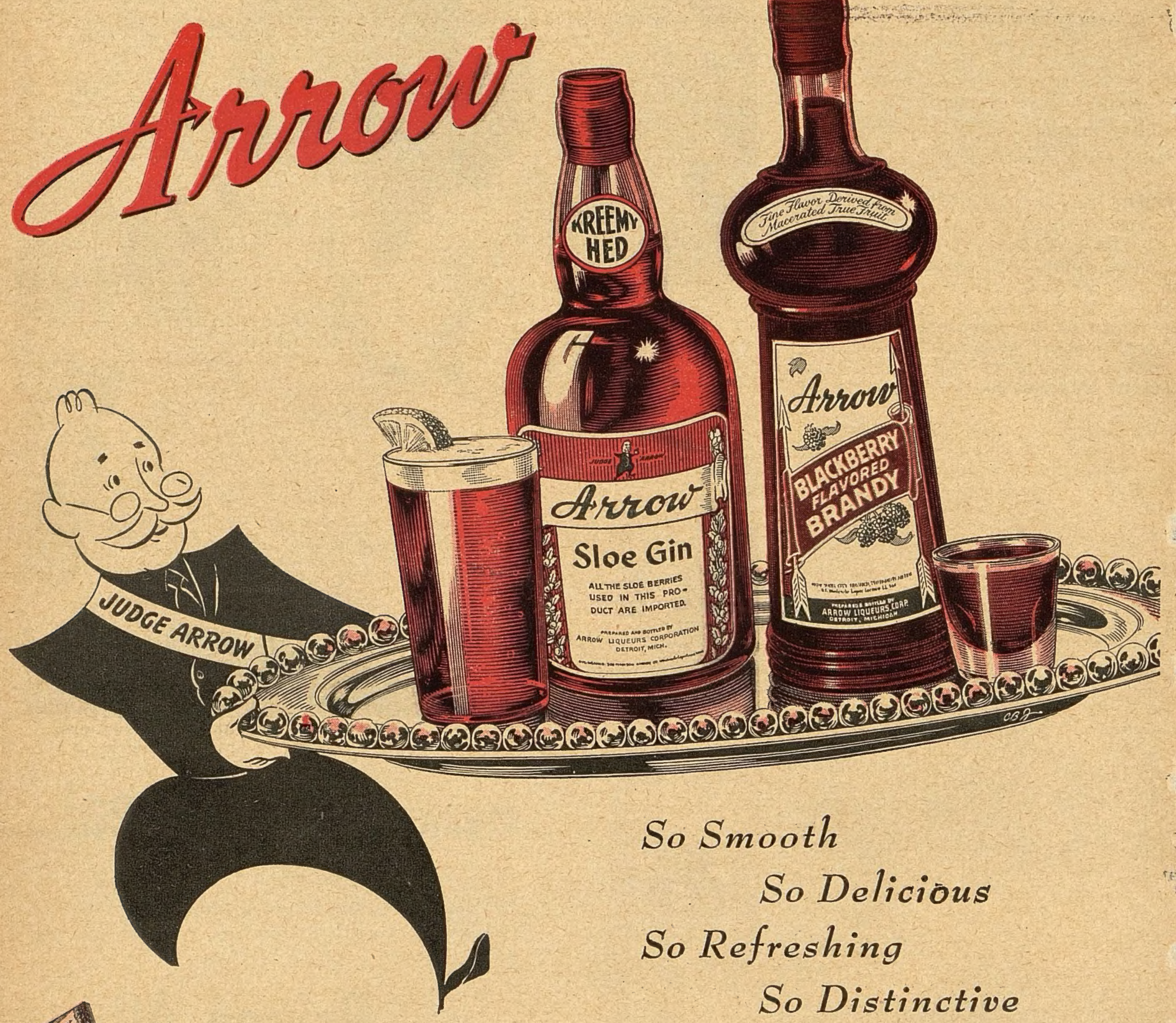
The National Joy Smoke

AMERICA'S BIGGEST SELLING LIQUEURS*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ALL THE SLOE BERRIES USED IN THIS PRODUCT ARE IMPORTED.
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Excellent Straight...Popular In Mixed Drinks...Arrow Blackberry Flavored Brandy and Kreemy Hed Sloe Gin

JUDGE ARROW

Always a Hit. **Sloe Gin Fizz.** Fill shaker with shaved ice. Jigger Arrow Kreemy Hed Sloe Gin. Juice ¼ lemon. Barspoon sugar. Shake, strain into 8 oz. glass. Fizz with seltzer.

JUDGE ARROW

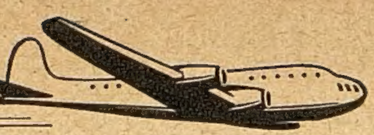
Makes Friends. **Sloe Gin Cola.** In 8 oz. glass put one cube ice. One jigger Arrow Kreemy Hed Sloe Gin. Fill with any cola drink.

JUDGE ARROW

Crowd Pleaser. **Blackberry Sour.** One jigger Arrow Blackberry Flavored Brandy. Juice of ½ lemon. Shake in shaved ice, strain into sour glass.

JUDGE ARROW

Happy Days. **Blackberry Highball.** In 8 oz. glass put two cubes ice. One jigger Blackberry Flavored Brandy. Fill with ginger ale or soda water.



ON THE BEAM

BY WAYNE PARRISH

nis long-awaited boom in pri- 'e flying—how much will it :tually amount to? An answer y one well qualified to judge

YOUR On the Beam editor has a guest writer for this week. He is Devon Francis, former aviaon editor of the Associated Press, ıthor of aviation books, and curntly on the staff of Popular Scince Magazine. A private flyer in s own right, he was asked to size private flying in the United ıtes. In response, he has written:

N the little more than a year that has elapsed since the close of the ır, private flying ostensibly has tered the Utopia which airmen ve been talking about for a quarof a century. The evidence of a om is unmistakable.

Almost 50,000 personal aircraft ve been licensed, twice as many as s country ever boasted before. ıd new planes are coming off the oduction lines at the rate of about 00 a month.

Licensed airmen numbered 342,-) as of last July 1, more than three ıes as many as ever held licenses fore in a peacetime year. Some gnosticators contend that a half llion aircraft will be personally ned in the next five years.

Personal aircraft have more than 00 landing fields at their disposal. t is, 2,000 more than they had ıore the war, and 3,050 new airrts are planned under the Federal rt Act for the next seven When the nation's airport s complete, there will be a g facility for approximately square miles of land area in inental United States.

Best of all, almost three dozen different models of aircraft (including icopter types) suitable for sale oss the counter to the man who ınts to own one either are in proıction or are planned for producon in the near future.

All that is on the credit side. But e statistics need a bleakly practil interpretation. Where is all this nthusiasm coming from? Why do ost manufacturers of personal airaft have so many orders on their ooks that they are months behind ı their deliveries?

The facts are sobering. Personal ying as an avocation and the use personal aircraft as a means of ansportation certainly are on the crease. But to assume that the wnership of airplanes will become quite general in the next few years is to ignore the limitations of the personal plane.

A good deal of the current interest in private flying is generated by the return to civilian life of army and navy airmen. Some of them are candidates today and will be candidates tomorrow for aircraft ownership. Flying schools, which are absorbing a big chunk of the manufacturers' output, are surfeited with G.I.s learning to become pilots at government expense. Added to their numbers are the ordinary citizens who, in this period of easy money, are ready to plank down cash for airplanes.

It would be a disservice to the personal aircraft industry for the public not to recognize the fact that the market for this type of vehicle is limited. Driving an automobile is relatively simple. Piloting a plane requires, by contrast, pretty good nervous-muscular coordination, long hours of training and practice, a nicety of judgment lacking in many automobile drivers, and, finally, money. Only if a man is prepared to spend $2,500 to $5,000 for an airplane and then $1,200 a year for gas and oil, maintenance, insurance, hangar rent, and incidentals for an average of three hours of flying a week should he consider owning an airplane. The annual turnover in airplane ownership before the war was appallingly high.

The statement that anyone can fly is pure eyewash. The accident record bears testimony to that. The personal plane in the past has been twenty-five times more accident-prone than an automobile despite the government's insistence on meticulous pilot training. And few accidents are the plane's fault.

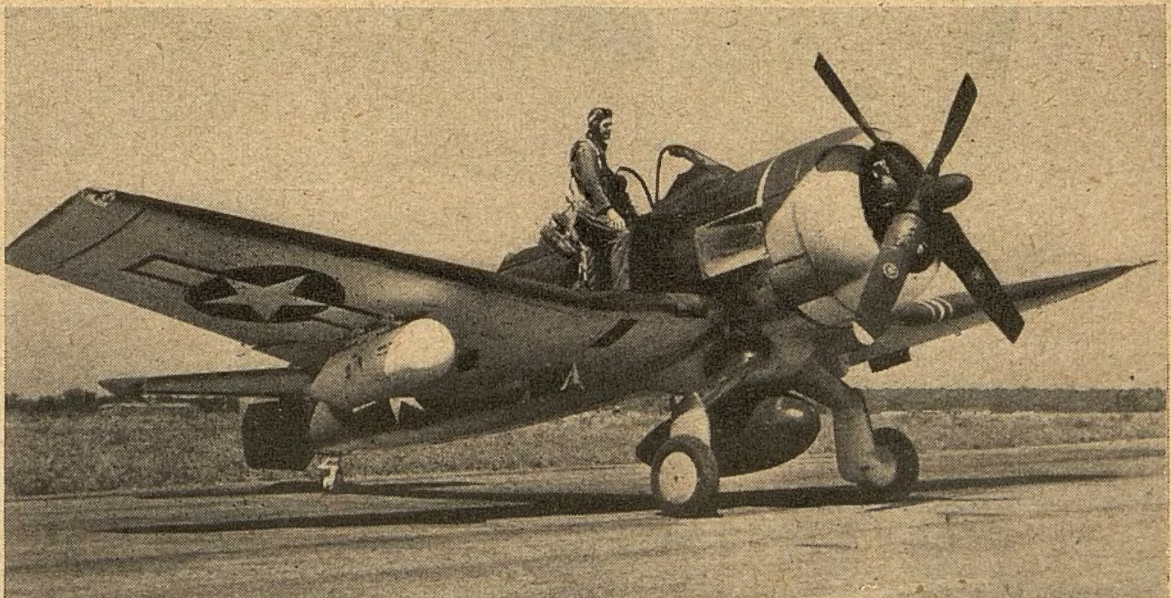
The chief deterrent to widespread airplane ownership is, of course, restricted utility. Utility made the automobile. Father, Mother, or Junior can drive it to the grocery store even in buckets of rain, but most personal airplanes are for fair weather only. Most pilots are only fair-weather pilots. None but the airplane and the pilot fitted for instrument flying ought to be out in instrument weather.

So the "boom" in personal flying calls for examination. If the man who likes to fly will recognize the personal plane's limitations, he can enjoy flying to the full. Right now he has a smorgasbord aviation feast spread before him.

TO the conventional high-wing monoplanes being sold in quantity are being added faster, slicked-up, low-wing planes with retractable landing gear. These are much easier to fly than were their forebears. One of them, the Culver-V model, has semi-automatic controls. Some, like the famous Ercoupe, refuse to spin. Some, like the Piper Super-cruiser, are highly spin-resistant. Some have one less control (two as against the conventional three), and at least one, the spectacular new Beechcraft Bonanza, can be flown 98 per cent of the time without recourse to the rudder pedals.

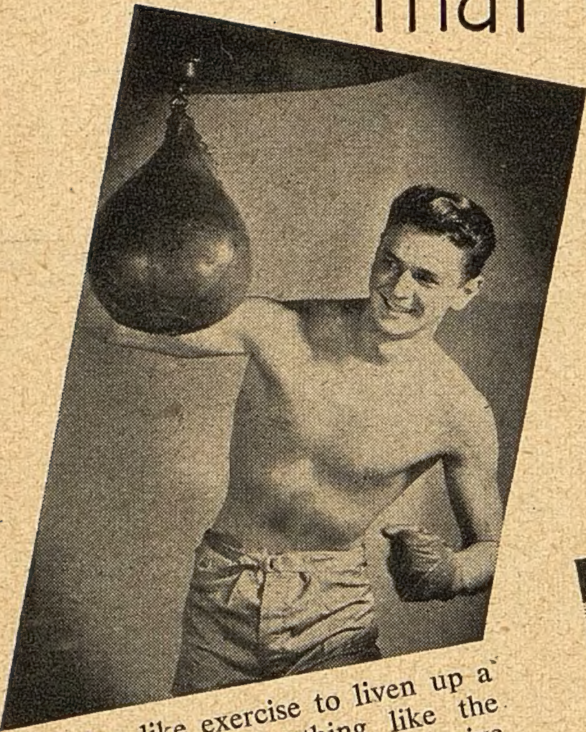
In a word, the manufacturers have done well in designing their machines for the public. The post-war Waco wears its propeller on its tail, both for efficiency and for reduction of the cabin noise level. A few amphibians, notably the Republic Seabee, are making their appearance to provide their owners with a lot more landing places.

Apart from stability, the most welcome ingredient of the new airplanes is increased speed. For cross-country aircraft the accepted minimum is 100 miles an hour, and 125 is no novelty. Some of the new models will stay wing-to-wing with a three-mile-a-minute DC-3, and one or two are even faster. The boom in personal flying is real. Better airplanes are contributing to it. A seasoned perspective on what an airplane can, and cannot, be expected to do will prevent the boom's degenerating into a bust.



Test pilot Bill Harrigan aboard the navy's new scout plane, the Curtiss SC-2 Seahawk.

Give your hair that Vital look



Nothing like exercise to liven up a man's looks. And nothing like the Vitalis "60-Second Workout" to give him hair to match! For this famous Workout makes your hair look vital, your scalp tingle. Want to trade that dull, lifeless mop for a *vigorous*-looking head of hair? Here's the recipe . . .

Take 50 seconds to massage Vitalis on your scalp . . . to set it *tingling*. You prevent dryness, rout loose dandruff, help check excessive falling hair. Next, 10 seconds to comb. No, your mirror isn't fooling. That's really *you!*

Try this for sighs! Women stop, look and melt at men with vigorous-looking hair. Helps in the office, too. Vital-looking young men get to see their names on the door. Start *your* success story today . . . with the Vitalis "60-Second Workout."

with the Vitalis "60-Second Workout"

VITALIS
BRISTOL-MYERS CO.

Product of Bristol-Myers

JUST BETWEEN OURSELVES

SPORTSMAN

WHEN a man' favorite dish is roas raccoon, it's a saf bet he's a sports man. And Earl Doucette is. His hob bies are hunting an fishing (luckily h lives in Maine), an he's been cashin in on them for fiftee years with feature articles for the outdoo magazines. Bears, according to him, ar like small boys. "One minute you feel lik paddling their breeches and the next the have you rolling in the aisle with the humorous antics." BULL MARKET IN BEAF (page 19) takes you on from there. M Doucette, who's a member of the Outdo Writers of America, is a newspaperman photographer, and publicity man beside

BETWEEN TWO WARS

LAURENCE KIRK, a Scotsman whose real name is Eric Andrew Simson, probably owes his career as an author to bad timing. He might have wound up in the classical arts but for the first World War, which nipped a 1914 scholarship to Oxford in th bud. He later exchanged his uniform fo a desk in the Colonial Office (Middle Ea Department); then took to travel and typewriter. He's been writing stories and novels ever since, with time out to serv with the R.A.F. during the second Wor War. His latest story, SMILING CORNER appears on page 30.

NEXT WEEK

Liberty
Book: A LONG WAY FROM BOSTON
WHAT IT COSTS RUSSIANS TO LIVE

HAV any idea o WHAT I COSTS RU SIANS T LIVE? Step fo a moment into Ivan's $200 felt boots with H E. Salisbury and you'll se why the recen Soviet 40-pe cent cut i prices of non rationed goods isn't the consumer's break you imagine. . . In an intimate close-up of HOWARD HUGHES, Joseph Wechsberg gives you a exclusive introduction to Hollywood's many sided mystery man. . . . Alice Maxwel tells an unusual kind of Christmas stor in THE GIFT OF LAUGHTER. . . . Liberty Book Condensation, A LONG WAY FRO BOSTON, by Beth O'Shea, is the hilariou story of two girls of the '20s and the daring trek to California in a Model-T For

Jingle bells! Telephone bells! Yuletide's on the way,
Be sparing of Long Distance calls on Christmas Eve and Day.
Jingle bells! Telephone bells! A million thanks to you
For easing up on greeting calls so urgent calls get through!

BELL TELEPHONE SYSTEM

Gracie bulbsnatches while George Burns!

Nobody knows better than you, Gracie Allen, that George Burns is a patient man. But *bulbsnatching!* . . . what red-blooded head-of-the-house can take *that* with a smile? Robbing one light socket to fill another just leads to strained eyes, barked shins, endless annoyance.

No wonder George is hot under the collar! How to cool him off? Easy—get some of those bright, dependable G-E lamp bulbs. They cost so little, any budget can afford them. And they're backed by General Electric lamp research, which is constantly at work to make G-E lamps *stay brighter longer!* That means more and more light for your money.

So, take a tip from Gracie, folks. Keep your tempers in check—keep General Electric lamps on hand. See your G-E dealer today!

G·E LAMPS

Stay Brighter Longer!

25, 40, 60 WATT
11¢
100 WATT 15¢
150 WATT 20¢
100-200-300 55¢
plus tax

GENERAL ELECTRIC

Be sure to hear
BURNS & ALLEN
on the
MAXWELL HOUSE COFFEE SHOW
every Thursday over NBC
at 8:30 P. M., E. S. T.

Liberty
THE MAGAZINE OF A FREE PEOPLE

Something New in Labor

The C.U.A. is out to sign up the 7,000,000 independent union members who won't affiliate with either the A.F.L. or C.I.O.

BY MORRIS MARKEY

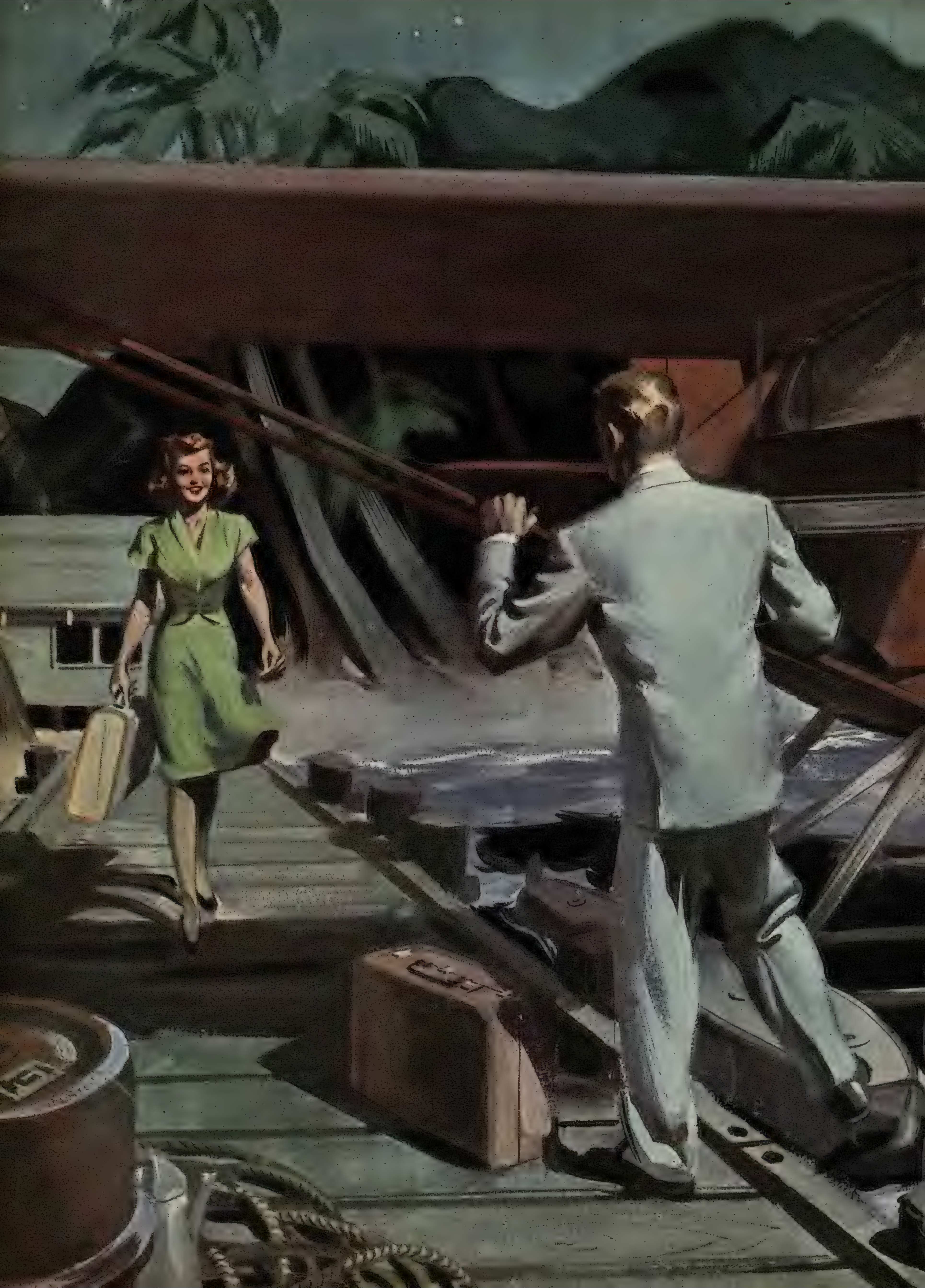
WHEN the young Confederated Unions of America (C.U.A.) held their annual convention in Chicago last September, Atwood R. Wynn, a workman in the Standard Oil Company's refinery at Baltimore, was elected their president for the term of one year. He tells of his return to the plant: "The fellows all wanted to know how soon I was quitting, and asked me to stay around at least a couple of weeks to straighten some things out. I said, 'Hell, how do you think I'd make a living if I didn't stay here on my job? C.U.A. isn't paying me to be a Phil Murray or a John Lewis. They aren't paying me a thin dime.' "

This should convince you that something new in the line of a national organization of trade-unions has come along. It's new, and it's the most swiftly growing labor organization in the country.

C.U.A. was first organized in Chicago in 1942, when the representatives of five or six fairly large independent unions met to exchange views and consider the future. Its aim is to secure the affiliation of all the 7,000,000 workmen in America who belong to unions and yet do not belong to either A.F.L. or C.I.O. That is a somewhat larger number than C.I.O. claims for its own membership, and virtually equals A.F.L.'s claim. At the present time C.U.A. has an actual enrollment of about 100 independent unions—a total of about 400,000 men and women. But this modest figure is somewhat misleading. At the last conference in Washington, there were in attendance and in active participation the representatives of independent unions who are not yet committed to membership, totaling more than 2,000,000 in enrollment.

I went down to Baltimore to see Wynn, and found a strapping young fellow hard at work at his job in (*Continued on page 52*)

C.U.A.'s unsalaried president, Atwood R. Wynn, earns his living as a pipe fitter at Standard Oil's Baltimore refinery.



UNTIL MOONRISE

The Caribbean isle seemed like Eden
to the two ex-flyers. But, like Eden, there was only one Eve.

BY URSULA PARROTT

ILLUSTRATED BY JAMES COLE

IN TWO PARTS—PART ONE

FIVE degrees north of the equator, fifty miles east of the South American Coast, the twin peaks of San Vittore's extinct volcanoes rise from the tropic sea.

The island's single town, also called San Vittore, curves along the coast line behind the one deep harbor, at the foot of the valley between the volcanoes.

The bells of San Vittore cathedral summon the faithful to worship in the same silver tones as when, in the seventeenth century, Spanish grandees in ruffs, embroidered doublets, and fine silken hose descended from their galleons with jeweled swords clanking, to offer thanksgiving for hairbreadth escapes from buccaneers. Now the worshipers are simple colored people, most of whom go barefoot.

The history of San Vittore is the history of the West Indies in miniature. In the twentieth century, when sugar ceased to be profitable, the English planters settled down tenaciously to cultivate limes and cacao. And for social life they played bridge at the so-called Visitors Club. And when in the second World War the United States kept an emergency air base for a few months on Piton Point, the club was very gay.

The main topic of postwar discussion at the club was the possibility of improved shipping.

The arrival of the two Americans, Nash and Duane, who not only purchased the old Miramar plantation but leased the flat land where the air base had been, offered a pleasant change of topic. Nash was planning to farm. Duane was going to start an inter-island airline.

JASON NASH and Tony Duane had traveled a long way round the world together to reach Miramar. Both were twenty-six years old in the spring of 1946. They had been combat pilots in the same group, through Africa, north to Sicily, north again to France, across Belgium, and so to Germany at the last.

But they had first met in San Vittore, in the brief days of the emergency air base. They had become close friends.

THEY sat now on the stone steps of Miramar, since they owned no porch chairs as yet. They were drinking uniced lime juice. Their electric refrigerator, for which the stream tumbling down from the mountain would generate current, was on order from the States.

After a week, the view of their own property from the porch still delighted them.

The plantation's title, in the names of Jason Nash and Anthony Duane, was framed in Miramar's living room. The room also contained some fine carved battered old mahogany chests and tables and packing boxes upon which to sit.

They had shared kit bags, razors, and such other worldly goods in communal fashion. Therefore the decision that Tony was to own half the plantation and Jay half the air line was almost automatic.

Beyond, on the point, was the flat land which they had leased jointly. They owned both sides of the stream, all the way down the valley to the reef-enclosed beach where the swimming was fine and anchorage for Tony's plane was safe.

"We've an invitation to the Visitors Club dance," Tony was saying lazily. "There wasn't a dance when we were here before. I wonder whether there are any pretty girls. They will be English, I suppose. All I need in this island paradise is a nice girl—besides the icebox and some pay passengers for the plane."

Their houseboy, Anatole, appeared round the corner of the porch, carrying their luncheon on a tray. Attired in duck trousers and nothing else but a magnificent chocolate-brown physique, he looked like a middleweight and extremely unlike a houseboy.

Anatole had called the morning they moved in, to state that his family had worked at Miramar the last time it was farmed. He would be their houseboy, his mother would be their cook, his grandmother their laundress. His young brother would fish, and assorted family connections would plant and cultivate crops.

The realtor-banker-general-storekeeper of San Vittore had assured them that all these arrangements were customary. The family would live in the cabins behind the main house. Anatole's wages would be two shillings a week, as would the cook's, also the laundress's. The boy who fished should be given sixpence occasionally.

WHEN Anatole was gone, Jay said, "The trouble with meeting a girl here, Tony, is that you won't be moving on. No tender last speeches, which you do mean while you're making them."

Tony startled him. "I realize that. I want to meet a girl to marry. You ought to, too. This place has sixteen rooms, even if only four are furnished. We can have two wives, one apiece."

Jay laid his work down. "I can see you as the solid air-line magnate more easily than as the settled head of a family."

"You're wrong, I hope." Tony was slightly self-conscious. He stood up, spoke quickly. "It's over—the squadron moving on, the laughs, the missions, the parties one had—to remember or to forget. It's been here today and gone tomorrow all my adult life. It suited me—no plans, no ambitions, no regrets."

Jay sat still.

"I'd never make sense," Tony said flatly—"start with one small ship, see how it goes—unless you advised me. For that matter, I'd never have saved a dime to buy a ship, large or small, except for you."

He turned. "You won't miss the

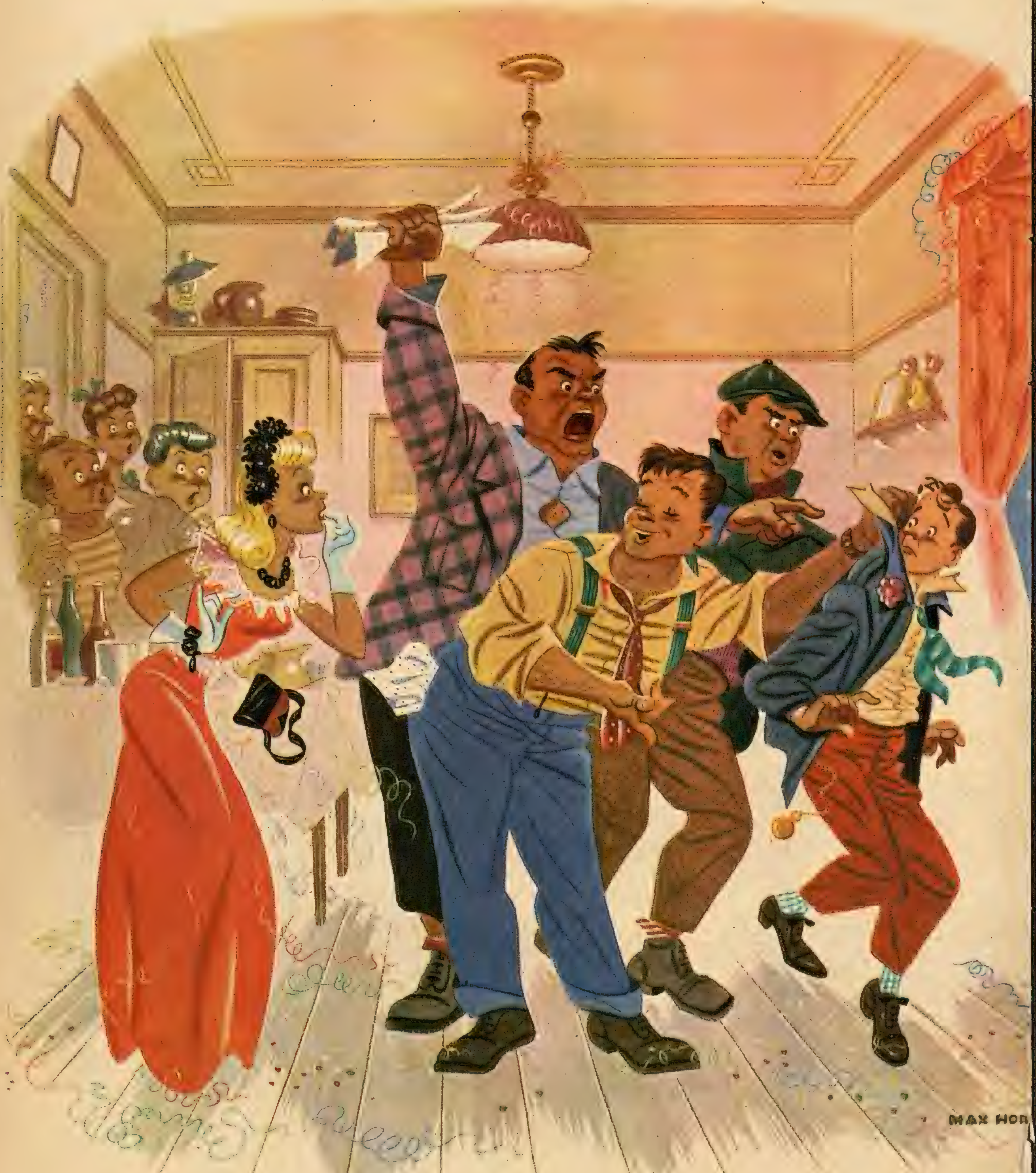
(*Continued on page 62*)

Sylvia's light footsteps coming down the long pier made the most exciting sound Tony had ever heard.

When the trim little blonde came into a coal-mining camp selling the Little Giant Encyclopedia, you should have seen those bruisers scramble for learning!

BY HARRISON GALLAHER

ILLUSTRATED BY MAX HORN



Culture Hounds

WE were souping up slugmulligan at our boardinghouse and talking about dames, as usual. "One of these days," I sounded off to the table at large, "a dame'll come into this coal-mine camp that knows a nugget from a lump of pig iron."

"Is comink tonat," said the boarding missus, who sat in her sagging rocker, "a boook lady."

"Daamps?" muttered Stanislaw Bronski.

In Outcrop, where men are bituminous miners and a boarding missus is the only dame, there's nothing much to look at — see? — but the weeds between the railroad tracks. So we talk a lot about dames, and every time they're mentioned the hunk of hulk known as Stanislaw Bronski—the Bronk—always blinks and says, "Daamps?"

"Sure," I said, as usual. "Daamps. A little bit here and a little bit there." I stopped eating cabbage and pork long enough to carve a dame in the air. A runt like me has got to sound off so these bruisers will know I'm around.

"The hopposite sax," said Joe Kick.

"Dames," I said. "Don't you know what a dame is yet?"

The Bronk sat there blinking from under the weed patch of flax that grows on his head. "Sure. Daamps is worst tink in world—"

"Ho-ho!" said Jan Kopec.

"Worst tink in world," the Bronk bumbled on, "for gatting mans dronk and mak' him fight. Batter if mans ron fast w'en daamps come round—"

"In which direction?" I growled. "I know which direction I'd run if I saw one of them Betty Grabble-lookin' dames, and I ain't just talkin'. I'd get there first." I shot Jan Kopec a hard look.

Jan Kopec slapped the table with the coal shovel he calls a hand. "Alex, my fran! Maybe I jost bost you op and gat there first mysalf. Who knows?" he said. "Wit' woman, every man is for himsalf."

"Yeah?" I grinned around on the side of my jaw. "A head is better than hulk any day."

Jan Kopec remembered the book lady. "Oxcuse os, Miss Strompbork," he said, "We are speakink to Alex outside."

Jan Kopec, a great gold-thatched giant with the kind of old-country what-the-hellness that women go for, kicked up his trick right brow and grinned back at me. The Bronk just sat there and blinked, and Joe Kick, the big clout, waggled his ears. In Outcrop a little bantam cock like me needs some brawn around him—see?—and in these three big brawls I buddy with I have heft and hulk to spare. On payday, Saturdays, I can shoot off my jib down at Steve Pop's, and my three bulk-busting buddies will back me up. But let a dame come along, it's like Jan Kopec says. . . .

"This book lady," I mused. "I hope she packs something besides books."

Down at the end of the table Pete Kopsac said, "Boooks? Wat's boooks? Life she is batter."

THE boarding missus shook her chins with a wag of her head. "Boooks. Boooks. My oncle was readink all the time boooks before he went crazy. Passink to Alex the bork."

"I don't want any more pork." I just happened to remember, looking at Pete Kopsac, that last night somebody had gimmicked me in a little game of acey-deucy. I don't like to put my money up—see?—unless it's a sure thing. But last night I'd mixed my bets with the bottle, and this Pete Kopsac is a big burly with a sharp deal. "I ain't hungry," I said.

Just then there came a knock at the front door. The boarding missus hoisted herself out of the rocker.

I pushed back my plate and started to shove up from the table. All of a sudden the Bronk made a gusty sound like a draft sucked through the mine by a ventilator.

"Femal' womans?" he breathed.

Jan Kopec whispered, "Batty Grabbles dame!"

I looked. Standing in the doorway was this dazzler. Behind her I saw Stan Sox—once Sokoloski—carrying a man-sized gritchel, and the boarding missus back of him. But I was so dazed by what the dazzler stood on that I didn't realize I'd seen anything else.

Nothing like the shafts this daisy brought into the room had ever been brought into Outcrop before. They were trim little shafts that started down in her shoes and kept on going, with a little bit here and a little bit there, until you saw she had big brown eyes and yellow hair as fluffy as beer suds.

"Every man for himself," said Jan Kopec.

The dazzler stated her business. Iris Stromberg, representing the Little Giant Encyclopedia.

"I'm sure you gentlemen are interested in culture," she said.

"Colture?" said the boarding missus. "You sallink colture?"

I winked at the book lady. She was still standing, and to show her I knew what culture was I said, "Sister, toddle into the other room and fetch yourself a chair."

I must have made an impression. She gazed at me a full two seconds before she went into the other room and came back with the chair.

"One way of being well bred," she said, "is to be well read. I'm sure you *gentlemen* will find the Little Giant Encyclopedia a source of cultural attainment, as well as the highroad to new worlds of knowledge." She sat down.

I JERKED my thumb around the table. "Lady, the only thing these bohunks need a highroad for is its gutter. Of all the clouts that ever caroused, it's these big wallops—"

"But a polished mind means a polished manner."

I picked my teeth. "Lady," I said, "why polish a hobnail boot?"

You could see she was serious about her work. Her brown eyes got bigger as she stared at me. "How—uncouth!" was what she murmured.

I waved the toothpick with a real elegant curve of my little finger. "Lady, let's put it this way. It ain't everybody that can be couth."

I thought we understood each other, but the rest of the evening was a puzzle to me. Instead of high-pressuring me, she went to work on the others.

"The Little Giant Encyclopedia," she said, "is more than a book." Her

(*Continued on page 55*)

The Incredible Colonel Zohms

He lived only in imagination, but his exploits in behalf of war correspondents will never be forgotten

BY FRANK MAHER

CARTOONS BY MAX HORN

WHEREVER World War II newspaper correspondents gather, toasts are drunk to Colonel Harry Zohms, who did more for war-front newsmen than any officer on record. But you won't find Colonel Zohms listed in military rosters. He existed only in the minds of his creators. His career dates from the Normandy invasion, during which the newsmen became so bogged down in military security regulations that they might just as well have stayed at home.

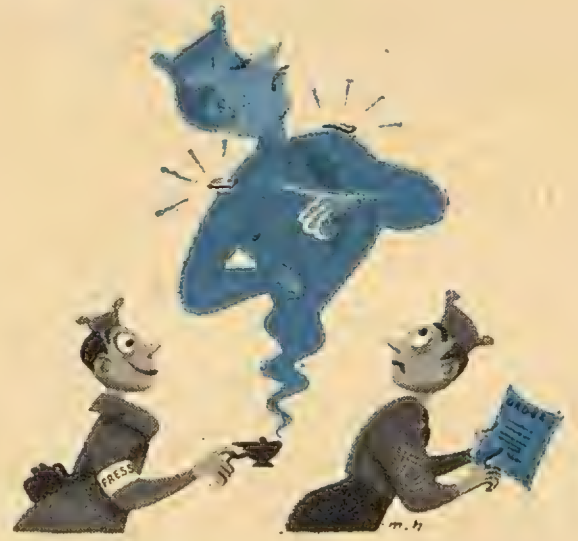
At a meeting of correspondents one of them sighed, "If we could only get an order from some low-ranking brass, and then let him sweat out the result!" Another drawled, "Well, I could get Harry Zohms to do it for us." His statement was pounced upon with demands of "Hell, let's!"

When the correspondent explained that Harry was only a figment of his imagination, interest fell, but bounced up again when it was proposed that Harry be commissioned as an officer. He was—on the spot. They made him a lieutenant.

By simply signing Lieutenant Harry Zohms' name it became easy to get action on leave passes, to secure fuel for press quarters, to produce rations. An amazing number of preferential interviews with captured enemy soldiers were secured through Lieutenant Zohms. And at the front Harry could requisition a jeep, assign couriers to newspapermen, or get any special equipment that might be needed.

It didn't matter who among the correspondents signed Zohms' name. It was never questioned. And to lend authenticity to the name they gave him body and substance. He was described as being five feet eleven inches tall and weighing 165 pounds, born in Arkansas, reared in Ohio, educated at New York University. He had been an accountant before entering the army. He was a handsome chap with blond hair and blue eyes. This last was designed to impress WAC officers, just in case they should be skeptical.

In officers' clubs the name of Lieutenant Harry Zohms would be called out with a request for him to answer the phone. Enlisted men would be stopped by correspondents and asked, "Have you seen Lieutenant Harry Zohms in this vicinity?" The correspondents would carefully describe him. Often soldiers would say, "Oh, yes, I just passed him on his way to 'A' Building. If you hurry you can catch him."



Signing the imaginary name of Colonel Zohms made it easy to get a leave pass.

Quite often a newsman would phone enlisted men in their barracks stating he was Lieutenant Zohms and ordering beer and sandwiches brought to the correspondents' quarters. Enlisted men in some minor jam over regulations would pour out their troubles to the correspondents. For a favored few, Lieutenant Zohms interceded — through a written recommendation for clemency.

Practically every correspondent had an enlisted man assigned to help carry typewriters, cameras, and other supplies. It seems that Zohms was a considerate man and felt deeply for the comfort of the men of the fourth estate.

As his power was tested, it was discovered that a lieutenancy was becoming inadequate. There was the time, for example, when Lieutenant Zohms sent out a written order countermanding one issued by a major. The situation became tepid as the area was searched for Lieutenant Zohms. One newsman barefacedly reported that Zohms had been transferred to the Air Forces from the infantry—just the day before. That explanation satisfied the major.

Shortly afterward Zohms was made a captain. When sufficient time had elapsed, he jumped to a major, and then to a lieutenant colonel. At a particularly dull spot in the war and during a session over some American-made beer, it was felt that Zohms should be promoted to a full colonel.

But there were some who felt that he shouldn't be. The discussion ran far into the night. Finally a poll was taken. It showed the correspondents equally divided. The deadlock was broken by inquiring of a near-by sentry if he thought Lieutenant Colonel Zohms deserved a promotion. The sentry said "Yes!" That clinched it. It was reasoned later, however, that the sentry could not have answered any other way.

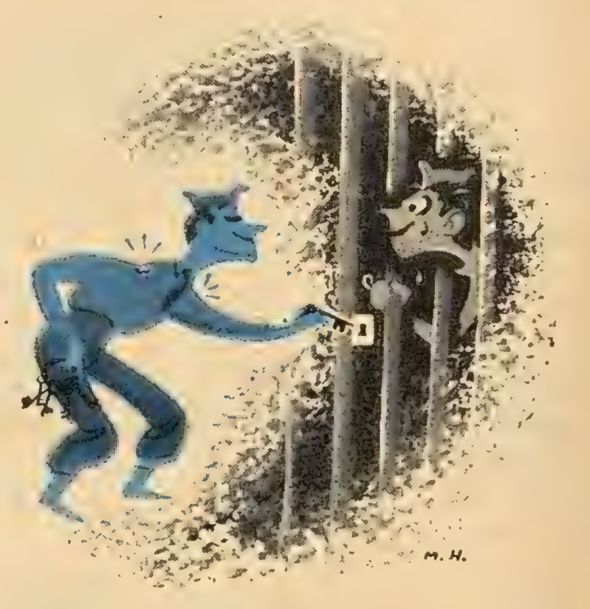
Harry certainly did attract a lot of feminine attention. The correspondents had given him such a build-up as an officer and a gentleman and a ladies' man that WAC officers insisted on meeting him. Finally an edict was issued that he could no longer be portrayed as an Adonis, lest some eager female officer start checking and upset the Zohms bandwagon.

Harry's ability to move from one army unit to another in order to issue his orders is unique in armed service annals. Good judgment was always exercised in the issuance of the directives, and as a result his orders were never questioned, although a few supply noncoms showed surprise at the liberal attitude of a man of such high rank.

As the war ended, Colonel Zohms issued one last sternly worded order authorizing homebound correspondents to take with them certain enemy souvenirs. This final Zohms order was obeyed to the letter.

Certain newsmen now on routine domestic assignments would like to get in touch with Zohms—presuming he has been honorably discharged from the army. (The first wave of returning correspondents overlooked this necessary step.) It seems the newsmen are running into local political red tape. They believe Harry could slash it.

THE END



Letters from Zohms on behalf of G.I.s in a jam were magically effective.

EWING GALLOWAY PHOTO

Shooting a black bear in the Maine woods at night with a camera is a lot harder than shooting one at high noon with a bullet.

Bull Market in Bears

BY EARLE DOUCETTE

Maine's bear surplus offers the hunter a 365-day season, a handsome rug, a tasty barbecue, and a ten-dollar bounty — all for one lucky bullet

ONE bright October day last fall, Bill Webb of Milo, Maine, thought he had dropped in on an international convention of black bears. Hunting in the woods back of the village, he entered an oak grove and found eight of the biggest members of the bruin family he ever had seen busily feeding on acorns.

A lesser man would have suddenly remembered a pressing engagement in town. But Bill calmly raised his old rifle to his shoulder and began methodically picking 'em off. A few seconds later three of the animals were very dead indeed, and the other five, judging from their take-off, were crossing the Arctic Circle.

The same week, Hadley Kneeland of Lincoln, also out hunting, saw in the distance an apple tree that seemed to be loaded with mammoth black fruit. Closer inspection proved that the "fruit" consisted of four bears, which he neatly plucked, if you'll pardon the expression.

Also in that same week, game warden supervisor Caleb Scribner of Patten claimed for Alex Edwards the b'ar hunter championship of the year. Alex, he said, had caused sixteen of the critters to become defunct and deceased. And for team honors, Scribner presented six of his hunters who, among them, had accounted for fifty-one.

By year's end it was estimated that between 1,500 and 2,000 bears had been shot, trapped, and otherwise removed from the Maine scenery. Stretched end to end, or even sidewise, that is a lot of bears. It was the biggest bear season that Maine, or any other state of which we have record, had ever experienced. Old inhabitants, who like to brag of "the good old days," were speechless for once.

The bear, in case you don't know, is not ordinarily a glut on the hunting market. Many disciples of Dan'l Boone never have seen one in a lifetime of hunting, and a bear rug is one of the most valued of hunting trophies.

As to just why Maine is hip-deep in bears all of a sudden, wild-life authorities don't pretend to know the answer. They only know that the bears are a confounded nuisance.

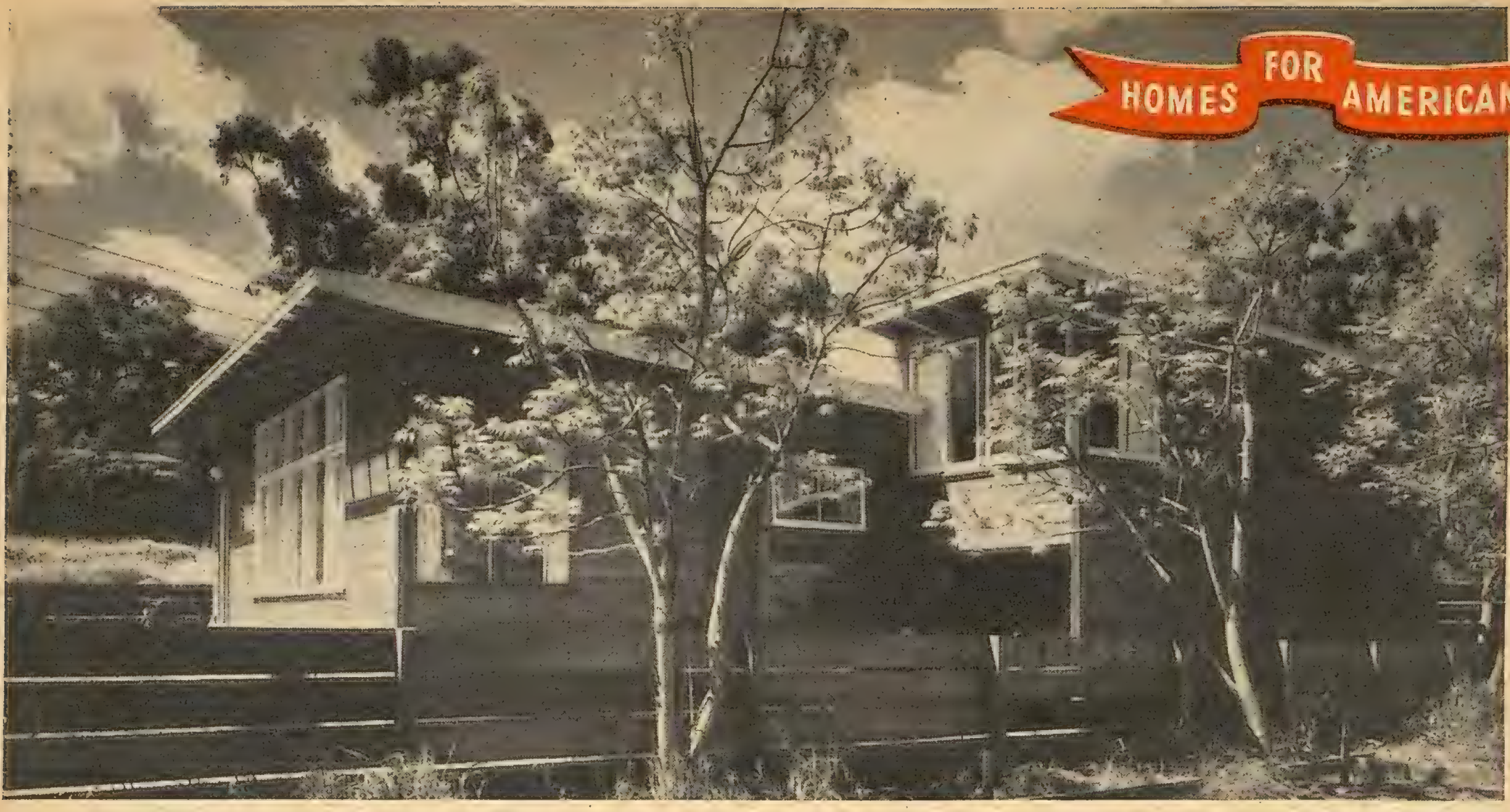
It has come to a point where the state will not only thank you for helping to kill off the surplus, but will pay you a bounty of ten dollars for every one of the animals shot or trapped in organized territory. Last year bounty was paid on 1,036 of the pesky critters, and this year probably will not see any marked decrease. Maine people, who are not notably quick to part with a dollar, are not paying out all this money just because they don't like to have bears underfoot. Last year the animals killed 1,119 sheep, 15 heifers, 7 pigs, 2 cows, 4 calves, and 1 colt.

It is probably one of the greatest understatements of this age to say that this bountiful supply of bears is to the liking of the average hunter, particularly those from out of state. Last year they trekked to Maine from as far west as the Mississippi and as far south as Virginia. Now that the news is spreading, guides expect an even greater immigration. And it's open season on bears all 365 days of the year in Maine, too.

Not all hunters will be crowned with success, for the element of luck plays a big part in bear hunting. The black bear is a shy animal, adept at

(*Continued on page 80*)

HOMES FOR AMERICANS


PHOTOS BY PHILIP FEIN

Natural redwood siding set off by narrow white trim gives this small house its rich, clean look. Nearest corner is the dining area. Study is at right, above garage.

Low-Cost Houses Today

Even in 1946 a house can be inexpensive and still be good. This pair of modern small homes shows why and how

BY DARRELL HUFF

TODAY'S house must be small and simple. Restrictions, shortages, and high costs pretty nearly dictate that. But today's house need not be cramped and dark. No matter how low the cost, it need not look or feel cheap. If it does (and the sad fact is that most houses being built in 1946 do), then the owner is getting a bad bargain.

On these pages are a pair of examples of what can be done. These are *good* houses. They are not cramped and they are not "cheap." They give comfort and distinction, yet can be built—even today—well within the low-cost range.

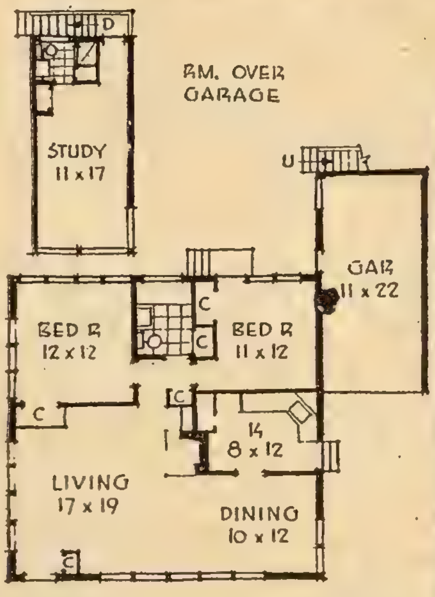
Take the one designed by Mario Corbett and built in Menlo Park, California. Its prewar cost was $4,300, including architect's and landscaping fees. Play safe by allowing for more than 50 per cent increase in building costs, and it is still an under-$7,000 house.

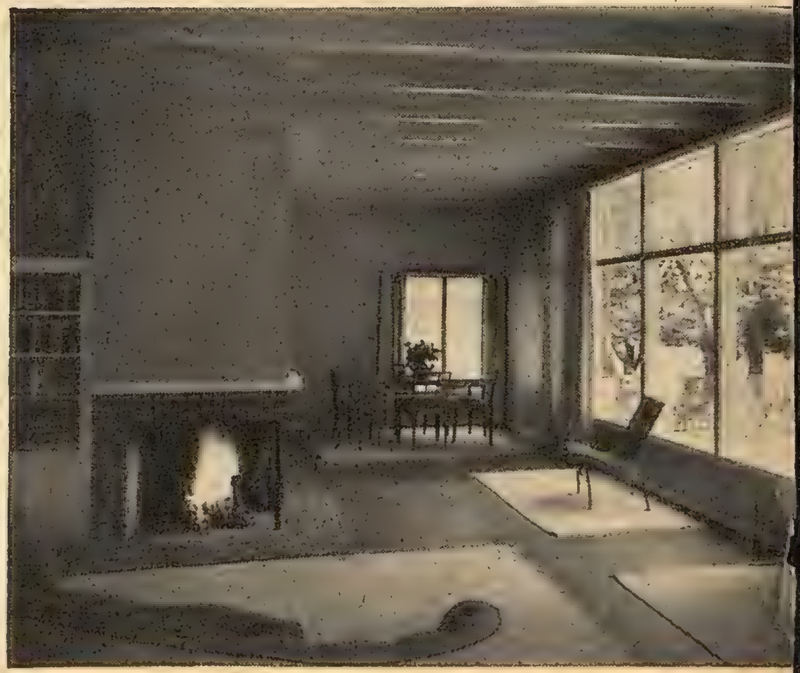
The other house shown here offers vastly more for your building dollar than most people are getting. It is a small house, designed for a couple, but it has a living-dining room 16 by 26 feet that would look well in a large, expensive house. Yet the architect, Donald Dwight Williams of Seattle, estimates *present* building cost of the house at $6,000.

Neither of these houses was designed to imitate anything else or to look like what it is not. Each was planned to give the most living for the money, with no concessions to architecture or building methods of bygone days.

The California house was built near Stanford University for a young banker. His idea was to rent or sell it, and what he had in mind was something conventional. Architect Corbett persuaded him that nowadays there was economy and sales value in modern design.

At the time the house was built there were several others—all highly conventional—going up in the neighborhood. This modern house cost less than they did. It provided more floor

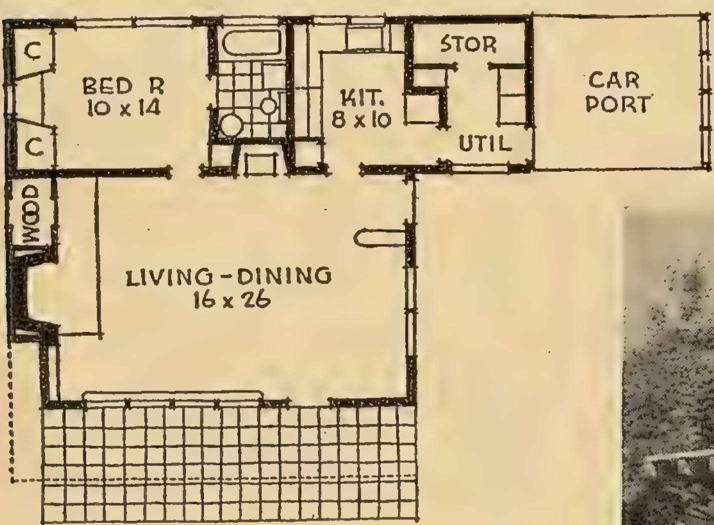


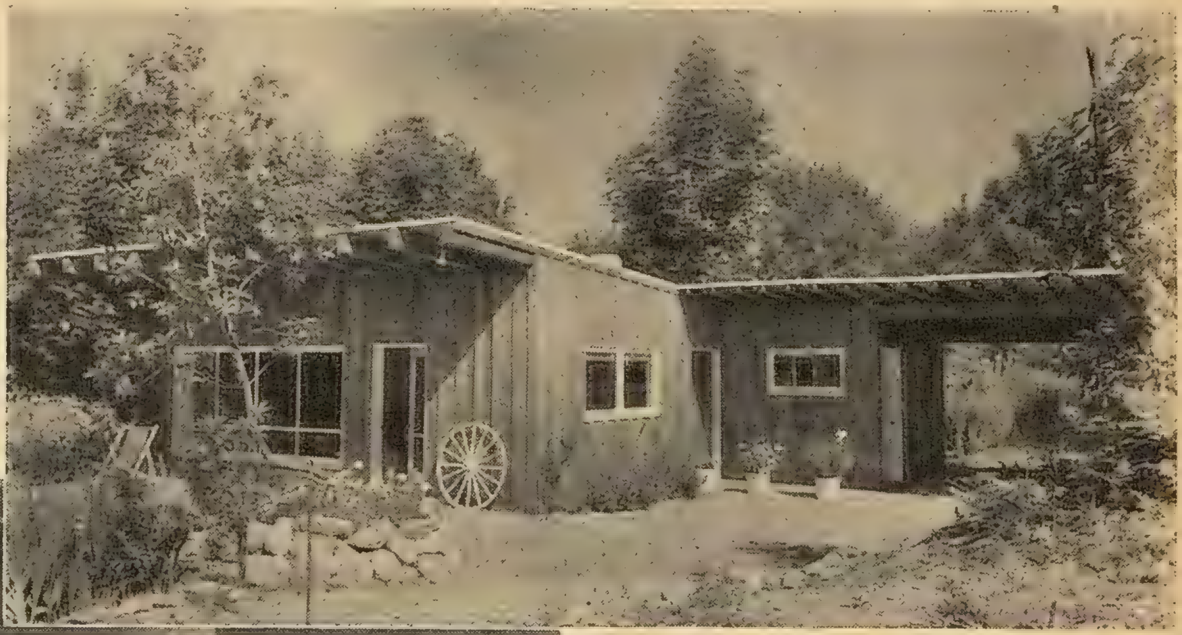

Living room is done in fir plywood. Exposed ceiling beams are attractive as well as economical. The corner fireplace, throwing heat two ways, is visible from dining room.

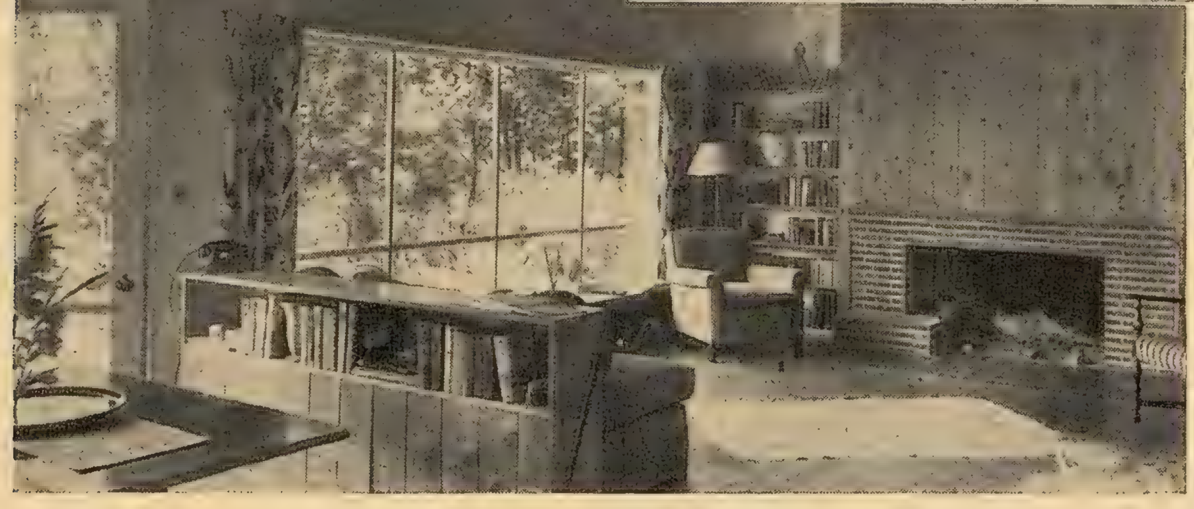
space. It offered a simple elegance. And so it brought more rent and in the end a higher sales price. Incidentally, it also influenced billions of dollars' worth of war housing.

Its plan is a simple rectangle containing a living room, dining area, small kitchen, bathroom, two bedrooms. In addition there is a garage, with a study and a second bathroom above it. The garage forms an ell to shelter a terrace behind the house, and there an outdoor fireplace has been built.

The same elements in design that give simple elegance also contributed to low cost. The big fixed windows and the casement windows both swing directly off the studding. The roof rafters are also the ceiling joists.






PHOTOS BY ERVEN JOURDAN

An inexpensive exterior of cedar boards and battens lends rustic charm to this three-room Seattle house. Trim is white, and one door is bright yellow, while the other is red plum. Money saved on the outside permits a rich-looking living room with big beams, Roman-brick fireplace, and smart built-in bookcases.

Outside, the redwood siding requires no paint. Inside, the finish is the same throughout the house—hard-pine floors, fir-plywood walls, insulation-board ceilings. This was not dictated by economy so much as by architect Corbett's belief that a small house should be that way. "In close quarters," he says, "different colors and textures can be tiring to eyes and nerves. Uniformity lends serenity."

Mr. and Mrs. Hans Roth are well pleased with their house—which, remember, was not designed for them. "We like the redwood exterior very much," Mrs. Roth says. "It is easy to keep up. In the last five years all we have done to it is put on a single coat of log oil. And the large windows give a wonderful feeling of spaciousness and make the outdoors part of the interior. On sunny winter days we can turn off the furnace about ten thirty in the morning and let the winter sun do our heating until three thirty or so."

For interior walls, fir plywood is a comparatively new material. Mrs. Roth finds it very practical. "It needs only occasional dusting," she says. "It shows no finger marks or scratches."

The extra room above the garage has been useful all along. With its separate entrance, it has been a highly private guest room, study, and work room. "For two years it was rented to a college student and helped pay for the house."

What kind of house would the Roths build if they were to plan a new one today? "We'd choose essentially the same plan, only an enlarged version. However, for its size and price, I don't see how a house could be much better than this one."

The small house in Seattle was planned especially for its present occupants, Mr. and Mrs. N. J. Rifkin. Essentially, it is a large living room, with minimum-sized kitchen, bedroom, bath, and storage rooms. Instead of a garage there is a car port —simply an extension of the roof.

When the Rifkins went to architect Donald Dwight Williams, they had decided that they wanted the emphasis on the living room. They wanted a big fireplace and wanted the house to face away from the street and toward a protected terrace.

Beyond that, they wanted a house small enough and simple enough not to "enslave" them, financially or otherwise. But they wanted it to be attractive.

"To provide this," says the architect, "we eliminated all hallways and let a car port serve as garage. We used the savings that resulted on the interior finish." Further economies came in the use of exterior cedar siding with natural finish (no paint needed now or later).

The house that came out of this expresses just what the Rifkins had in mind. The living-room walls are rough white plaster. The floors are random planking. Above the heavy beams, in natural wood finish, is a composition-board ceiling painted coral. The slab doors are coral also. In the bedroom the ceiling is pale green, the walls are off-white, the curtains raspberry and white. Bath, kitchen, and service room are yellow, white, and forest green.

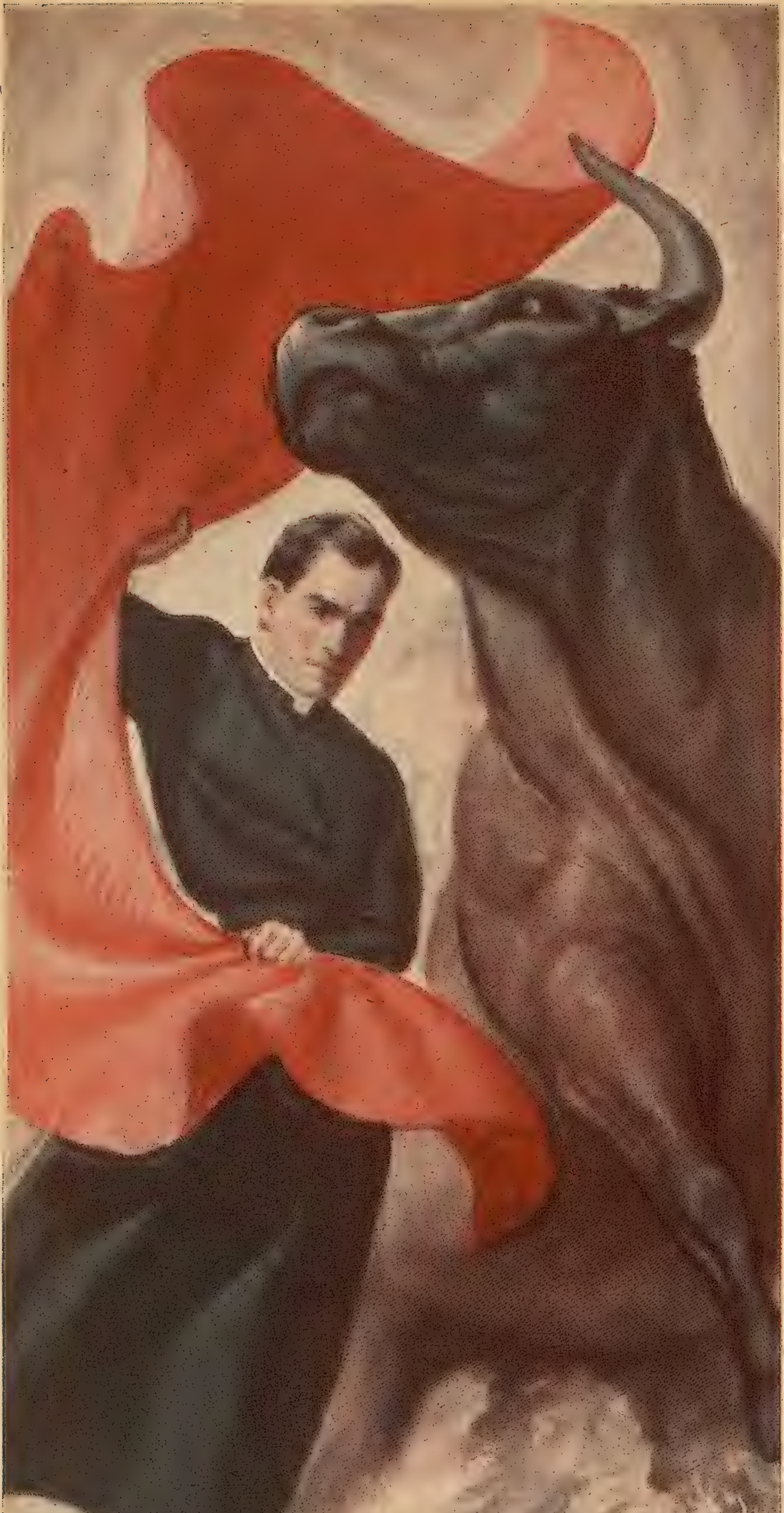
Clients like the Rifkins perhaps justify Mr. Williams' insistence that an architect's services are worth any home-builder's while. "I have designed and built homes costing from $2,500 to $50,000," he says. "And in my opinion, the smaller the home and the more limited the income, the more the family needs a good architect, who can find ways to economize on space and costs without sacrifice of design and utility."

THE END

Liberty's
SHORT SHORT
STORY

BY
JAMES ATLEE PHILLIPS

ILLUSTRATED BY RAFAEL DESOTO



Deliberately, I worked the big beast through three successive *verónicas* with the cape swirling.

FAILING light made Father Sanchez put his book down. From where he was sitting, the padre could see darkness staining the rose-colored pinnacles of his church, flowing like a river of blue shadows over the small ranchos that encircled the town of San Miguel. The last flush of sunlight was draining off the peaks that stretched away toward Mexico City.

Father Sanchez was an old man with a honed mahogany face and a fiercely hooked nose. Sitting in the high room, with the collar of his cassock unbuttoned, he looked over the slanting roofs of the little mountain town he had served for nearly half a century. It was not much changed, he reflected. True, there was the elaborate Posado San Francisco, where the fat *turista* ladies stayed, and the electric current had come marching across the hills from Michoacán. Otherwise it was almost the same.

The old man was sitting there listening to familiar sounds when someone knocked on the door. He gave the permission to enter, and Father Morales came in. Morales was a young priest, dark and intense, and his eyes shone like wet ink. The old priest watched him come across the room and reflected that he would do well in San Miguel, for the Mexican people like their priests thin. The young man sat down and rubbed at his chin savagely.

The workmen were not through with the railing of the new altar, he complained angrily, and their rubbish would handicap him at benediction. Father Sanchez half smiled and murmured that it was a delicate job, that the gold leaf must be applied very carefully. The young priest replied irritably that he himself could have put it on in three weeks. It was the bull ring that was taking all the town's money! The older priest listened in silence, for the questioning words were dangerously near heresy. He said nothing until they had all rushed out.

"The work is never quite done,"

Father Sanchez and the Bull

Telling a half-truth seemed wiser, even for a priest, than the whole truth

said Father Sanchez mildly. "We fix this thing or that, and something else requires attention." Morales nodded, but his mouth was working with anger and he was not listening closely.

Nearly fifty years ago, said Father Sanchez, a great storm blew in over the Guanajuato Mountains. It came without warning, in the middle of a starlit night, and its black fury was sheeted with flame. A bolt of lightning struck down out of it and destroyed nearly the whole nave of the church. The chancel aisle was filled with chunks of marble and masonry, and the roof was a great hole open to the sky. The church had been the pride of the countryside, and such damage seemed almost irreparable. The marble alone had come two thousand miles, and there was little money to provide more of it.

The young priest nodded, but he was not greatly interested. After all, it had happened a long time ago. Father Sanchez was staring out of the window and he went on in the same quiet voice. He had come up to the study, this room in which they were sitting, and had wondered how he could rebuild his church. All through the day, except for the services, he had sat there. In the afternoon he had watched the population go streaming through the streets toward the Plaza de Toros, for a famous matador from Mexico City was in the *corrido* that day. When the bull ring was filled and the shouts were loud in the afternoon sunlight, a solution had come to the worried priest.

THE young man looked up, interest tightening his face as Father Sanchez lighted the tapers.

"I was wearing my best vestments," said the old man, "and when I came walking into the ring, the shouting died down. The drunken ones called out, but most of them only stared. The matador had been playing a bull, and he worked it toward the far side, trying to keep it away from me. When I was in the center, I raised my arms and told them about the disaster that had befallen the church. It was very quiet; in all the sea of faces no one spoke, and when I asked them for money, only a pitiful amount of coins was thrown down. I was a new priest, and not well known."

The younger man was listening intently now.

"Their selfishness made me angry," said Father Sanchez, "just as you are angry now. It was, after all, their church and one of the finest in all Mexico. So I turned around and faced the bull. With my skirts dragging in the dust of the ring, I walked over and took the cape and sword away from the matador. He was so surprised that he gave them up without a protest, and the voices that had been crying for me to quit the ring grew silent.

"It was a black bull, a large one and well horned. He was against the fence, pawing, and I walked in and flaunted the cape in his face. He charged out with the banderillas bouncing in his thick neck, and I let him rush by. Then I trudged after him. The matador came out and tried to take the cape from me, but I was quite angry by then and would not let him have it. Those who were sitting in the *sombra* seats began to throw money down; it was coming in bundles of peso notes, and I went on stalking the toro."

FATHER MORALES' eyes were gleaming in the candlelight. "Were you not frightened?" he asked.

"Of course I was frightened," answered the old priest. "But it was a necessary thing; it had to be done." He went on in the same mild voice. "The bull put a horn in the edge of my cassock and spun me to my knees. The voices came down like a solid shout, begging me to quit the ring. Money was streaming down with their words, so that the whole dusty floor of the ring was littered with it. I got up from my knees and walked deeply into the bull's terrain; then, deliberately, I worked the big beast through three successive *verónicas* with the cape swirling.

"That brought them all out of their seats, and the money came down in a shower."

"Did you put the sword in him, padre?" asked the young Morales, hardly breathing.

"No," said the old man. "That would not have been proper. But when I was through, the bull was on his knees and his tongue was slimed with dust. He was through fighting. That afternoon more than ninety thousand pesos were picked up from the dust, but we could not use it all for the church." The padre smiled again faintly. "Pablo Ruiz, the tailor, charged me five centavos to mend my cassock, and he grumbled that it should be more. Tricked by excitement, he had thrown more than a hundred pesos into the ring."

THE young priest let out his breath with a whistling sigh. "That was a very great thing," he said gravely.

The old man shrugged. "If we do not have one tool, we must use another," he said. "But it is nearly time for benediction."

"Yes, padre." The young priest arose and went hurrying out of the room. It was almost completely dark, and lights were flickering on in the windows below. Murmuring peons came barefooted down the cobbled streets. The bells were tolling out their call to prayer, and the faithful began to move across the ancient Mexican earth in answer. Father Sanchez lighted a thin *cigarro* and watched them come.

A small doubt was gnawing in the padre's mind. Perhaps it was not fitting in the sight of God that he should have told young Morales only half the truth about that early occurrence in the bull ring. Perhaps he should have added that in his youth he had been acclaimed by the *aficionados* of Madrid as one of the finest young matadors in Spain. That had been in the extravagant days of his youth, before he had taken holy orders. But, with the good Havana smoke curling up around his face, the aged priest reflected that it would have weakened his revelation somewhat. Angry young men with questions should not be confused with nonessentials. As the choir began to sing in the church below, Father Sanchez thought he could detect a note of added fervor in the swelling chorus. He nodded with satisfaction and went on puffing at the thin cigar.

THE END

What Russian Children Are Taught

BY WILLIAM VAN NARVIG

EDUCATION, which was virtually suspended during the war, has returned to the Soviet Union with a bang. It has taken a year to reintroduce teachers to their education tasks and to print new textbooks that include, among other things, revised information about the United States. But now some 26,000,000 children from eight to fifteen are back in school, a great majority for the first time in five years.

The very first thing that greeted them as they opened their new primers and other textbooks last September was the printed inscription on the flyleaf: *"Blagodarim tebe, Tovarishtch Stalin, za stchastlivoye detstvo"* (We thank thee, Comrade Stalin, for a happy childhood).

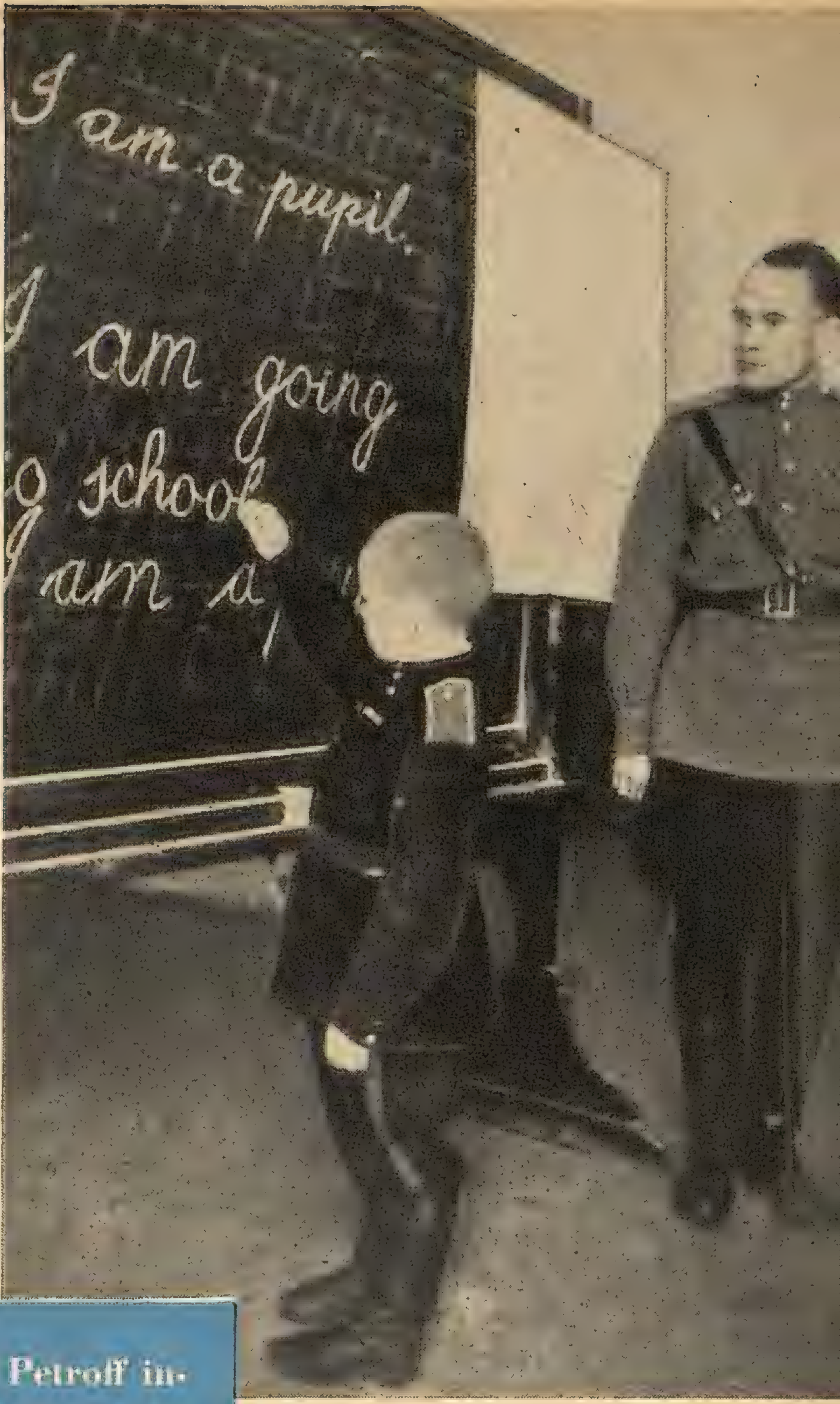
Russia's children are brought up, to a point, by their parents. But, essentially, they are not their parents' children. Like everything in Russia today, they belong to Stalin. They are Stalin's children. Through Stalin they belong to the Politburo and the Communist Party. Therefore they have to thank Stalin, not their parents, for a happy childhood. And it is the Politburo and the Communist Party, not the parents, who determine what is good for the children to know and what sort of knowledge should be withheld from them.

Petroff invented the electric light and America is in hopeless decay in the newly revised textbooks of the Soviet Union

Among the things Stalin's children are being taught is a rather interesting conception of the United States. I quote from a geography textbook for use in grade schools. It was originally written in 1938, but underneath is printed, "Revised and brought up to date in 1946." This is what it says about the United States:

"This huge, rich country is completely in the hands of a small gang of millionaires who own the capitalist industrial *combinats* [trusts]—steel, oil, coal, copper, etc. These millionaires live in luxurious splendor while squeezing every ounce of profit out of their workers, who have no economic rights. The working day is nine and ten hours. An American worker is subject to greater exploitation, must work much harder, than a worker in Europe. By the time the American worker has reached the age of forty-five he has lost his health and become an old man, dependent on charity.

"Because of these exploitation methods, the world economic crisis hit American capitalist industry most severely. As a result, many millions of American workers were thrown on the streets as beggars. In 1934 there were more than 17,000,000 American unemployed. Unemployment reached dimensions never known in any civilized country. Much of it is still in evidence.



English is second only to Russian at the Suvarov School for young cadets.

"Private American agriculture is likewise in a state of decay. Having been turned into paupers, many farmers simply had to abandon their farms. . . . At the same time the capitalist *combinats,* in their lust for greater profits, destroy millions of bushels of grain needed by the hungry and burn corn in locomotives in order to push up the price of grain and flour which the people must pay."

Such is the conception of the United States drilled into the minds of 26,000,000 youngsters. Naturally, they aren't told that this "decaying capitalist country" helped the Soviet Union in its darkest hour; that would be ridiculous. The war, both in the west and the east, was won by the Soviet Union, which then, out of sheer goodness of heart, allowed the capitalist powers to share in the spoils of victory. *Sovietskaya vlast* (Soviet power) presents only its own version of the picture, and no other.

Before the schools were reopened throughout Russia on September 2, the teachers received strict instructions. These read in part: "It is the patriotic duty of every teacher to bring up active, educated and—most imperative—ideologically minded youth. Lenin himself has pointed out more than once that the schools cannot remain outside politics. . . . The very first thing a child must learn when he enters school is that the individual is completely subordinated to the state. Individualistic expression can be allowed only along lines dictated by the state. . . . Whenever there is a conflict between educational and ideological aims, the educational activity of school and teacher must be subordinated to the bringing-up of Soviet youth in the spirit of scientific, Communistic philosophy."

Thus, Soviet children from their first day in school are brought up as ideological Communists first, and as educated persons only second. Also, on their first day in school they are apprised that a great blessing has come to them—they have been accepted as Stalin's children. They must look up to Stalin, the father. At least once a week they must write brief essays or draw pictures on how they can best fulfill the wishes of Comrade Stalin.

FROM the very beginning the Soviet child's curriculum revolves around intense Soviet nationalism. In kindergarten class he is told about Stalin's marvelous Five-Year Plan, which is designed to carry Soviet power to undreamed-of heights where it will outshine everything ever attempted in capitalistic countries.

His first steps in history center around the miraculous exploits of the Red Army and of partisan heroes in the *Fatherland War* against the Hitlerites. His first problem in arithmetic reads, "If our Stakhanovites can mine so-and-so many tons of coal in one shift, how many can they mine in three shifts?" Also, everything that is good and great in the world has come out of Russia. Thus, according to the Soviet pupil's textbook, it was not an Englishman by name of Stephenson who invented the locomotive, but Academician Polzunoff. The name Marconi is unknown in radio because it was Professor Popoff who invented it. Edison did not invent the first incandescent lamp; it was done by the great Russian scientist Petroff.

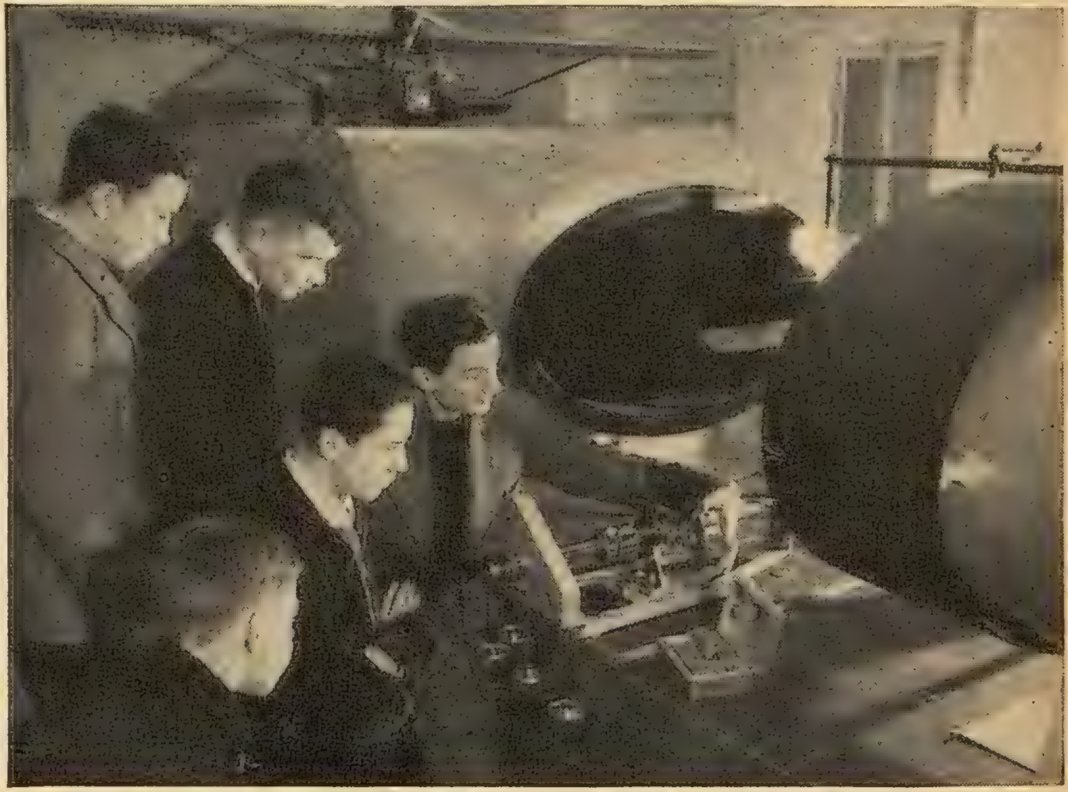
Incidentally, I received my education—grade school, high school, and college—in Russia, prior to the Revolution. I never heard of Polzunoff, Popoff, and Petroff. Today, history in Russia has been tailored along Soviet nationalist lines. If past events did not comply with the purpose of this rewriting, they were simply changed and nonexistent Russian scientific heroes were invented.

Another innovation greeted Soviet pupils this school year: For the first time since the downfall of the Czarist regime they all had to wear uniforms. Girls must wear dark-brown pleated dresses with white collars and black aprons. Boys must appear in a black military tunic with shoulder epualets and brass buttons. Pupils who have excelled in deportment, application, and adaptability are awarded chest ribbons.

Not all Soviet children benefit from the new educational program. Children between eight and fifteen go to grade school, a compulsory course of seven years. But those who had reached fifteen, both boys and girls, weren't sent back to school, even though they had had little or no schooling for the past five years. Russia is in desperate need of labor. So those who were fifteen and over had to remain in the factories and on the collective farms to continue the occupations in which they had been trained during the war.

While grade-school tuition is free in Russia, textbooks and uniforms must be paid for. This is costly to the average Russian family especially where there are several children. Moreover, those who (*Continued on page* 77)

Co-education is not permitted in city schools where these Leningrad girls study. Boys and girls still study together in rural sections.



These teen-age Soviet lads, not content with what they learn in school hours, have organized a hobby group to experiment in aerodynamics.

SOVFOTO

Although the Russians don't seem to believe in the concept of "one world," still they drum into their children facts of global geography.

EMIL HERMAN PHOTO

Alex Kramer working in a gadget-laden Tin-Pan Alley cubicle.

Tin-Pan Alley's Sherlock Holmes

When tyro composers claim they've been robbed, Alex Kramer, who can remember 15,000 tunes, proves there's nothing new in popular music

BY ROBERT W. MINTON

WHEN Cole Porter was sued for plagiarism last May, Sigmund Spaeth (the tune detective), Deems Taylor, Monty Woolley, and Richard Rodgers rushed to his defense. The plaintiff, one Ira B. Arnstein, said he awoke one night to see Porter making off with several of his compositions which later turned up as My Heart Belongs to Daddy, Begin the Beguine, Don't Fence Me In, Night and Day, and You'd Be So Nice to Come Home To.

Monty Woolley testified that he was with Porter when he wrote Night and Day; Deems Taylor stated Porter was not given to nocturnal purloining; Spaeth and Rodgers played the piano for the defense.

But what really clinched Porter's case was an enlarged sheet of musical analysis prepared by Alex M. Kramer, a man virtually unknown to the general public.

Kramer, a one-time theater cellist, showed, among other things, that Don't Fence Me In was anything but a new musical idea. Its opening notes have appeared in La Golondrina, the Merry Widow Waltz, That Black-and-White Baby of Mine (composed by Cole Porter himself in 1921, long before Arnstein reported that he was robbed), Polly-Wolly-Doodle, and How Dry I Am (also known to churchgoers as the hymn, O Happy Day). Each one starts with the same four notes. However, each of the songs sounds completely different because of the way the notes are played.

There was no evidence that any composer had stolen these four notes from someone else. It was sheer coincidence—something that happens quite frequently in composing music.

Kramer's chart, for example, traced similarities in Night and Day to The Lotus Flower by Robert Schumann. Begin the Beguine and My Heart Belongs to Daddy turned out to have musical relatives too, so, largely on the basis of Kramer's findings, the jury decided that Arnstein had no priority on the notes in question.

In the nine years he's been at it, Kramer has never been on the losing side of a plagiarism suit. His equipment is twofold: a brilliant memory and New York's rarest privately owned music library which contains 25,000 pieces. Kramer calls his process of song sleuthing, "collection plus recollection." He can remember 15,000 songs, including the names of composers, lyricists, publishers, and dates of copyrights.

For instance, when the radio networks refused to pay the ASCAP price for airing its songs, ASCAP hired Kramer to monitor musical programs daily from 7 P.M. to midnight to record violations. As soon as an ASCAP tune came on the air, Kramer flipped a switch and cut a record of the music. The announcer wouldn't announce it was an ASCAP tune but that made no difference. Kramer knew every ASCAP song automatically. He recorded more than 2,000 songs in a year, every one of them a violation!

Nine years ago his prodigious memory and remarkable library were going to waste, relatively speaking. Then Archie Fletcher, the publisher, asked his aid in a plagiarism suit involving the song, On the Beach at Bali Bali.

Kramer's evidence cinched the case and he was launched on a new career.

Kramer is a small, rather heavy-set man of fifty-three, genial and easygoing. He does his work in the basement of his comfortable Forest Hills, Long Island, home. Before he starts his research on a song, he analyzes it for clues as to its predecessor. A minor key, for instance, may mean that Hungarian composers have used this one before. Or he may find that it is written in a simple five-note scale used by the Chinese and also prevalent in Scotch bagpipe music. There are other things involved, but he considers them trade secrets.

Practical jokers have preyed upon his good nature. Once a man called up at 3 A.M. and said, "Mr. Kramer, listen to this song." One of the loudest Bronx cheers ever carried by a phone line rent the still of Kramer's bedroom. Now every time he goes to the Yankee Stadium he keeps one ear cocked for that razzberry. "I'll know it when I hear it," he says.

And no doubt he will, for Kramer's only mental lapses occur around the house, usually when his wife asks him to do such chores as hanging up his shirts.

THE END

In the Hole of the Doughnut

Two years after, a fighting man finds words to tell what it was really like at Bastogne

BY JOHN D. HANLON

THE night before Christmas Eve, two years ago this month, General Anthony C. McAuliffe replied "Nuts!" to a German demand that he surrender his 101st Airborne Division and the town of Bastogne, Belgium. With this wry cut-off, the defense of Bastogne became the best-known fight of World War II, and the history books had another spontaneous, honest-from-battle war cry.

But the odd part of the Bastogne fight, to those of us who were "inside the hole of the doughnut," was that we didn't realize we had done such a smashing job of turning back the Nazis until we read it in the papers. And no matter what kind of miracle we turned in repulsing four times our number, all I recall now are the oddities, the incongruities and the plain screwy happenings—not the gruesomeness — during the fight for that small Belgian village. It was, in fact, the damndest battle I ever fought.

Take the way we got into it. Our first indication that the Germans had broken through in the Ardennes came at 11.30 P.M. on Sunday night, December 17, 1944. At the time we were in the, for us, unusual category of rear echelon troops encamped near Reims, France. That night the regimental commander called a meeting. He told us the Germans had broken through our lines "somewhere in Belgium"; how large a break and how far they had progressed he did not know. At any rate, we were to go to that somewhere. (He was not withholding known facts. No one knew what was happening.) The Eighty-second Airborne Division, stationed a few miles from us, was to leave, he said, at noon the next day, Monday. We were to follow at 4 P.M.

The early starters in the Eighty-second Division had so little time they simply left clothes hanging on the hooks and mounted the waiting trucks. As a result of these hectic departures—and the reshuffling of practically the whole army in Europe—the trucks scheduled to move us at 4 P.M. did not arrive, in some cases, until after six.

However, the delay gave our leave-taking the atmosphere of a World War I embarkation. Several French girls, definitely not strangers to our soldiers, hurried into camp when the word reached their near-by village that the *parachutistes* were preparing to leave. Our own Red Cross girls stood on the sidewalks talking and joking with the men; the band played in the distance. One Red Cross girl came over to where I was standing, her eyes shining with patriotism, and said quietly, "If there weren't so many people around I'd kiss you for luck." What price glory!

INTERNATIONAL NEWS PHOTO

Bastogne, more than any single battle, was won by the courage of each individual soldier.

Finally, just at dusk, we departed. Our "wild dash" to Bastogne was a dull, uninteresting haul. As a matter of fact, we were supposed to go much farther than Bastogne. Exactly where, I have long since forgotten, but I didn't even know there was such a place as Bastogne at the time. And the time, that night, went slow.

The pace slowed down even more after we crossed into Belgium, as our trucks closed in on the columns ahead. Finally we stopped completely. As far ahead as one could see, trucks were jammed, bumper to tail. Outgoing traffic increased. I recall it was all heavy equipment: steam shovels, engineer boats, hospital equipment, and the like.

My second in command, Major Cleveland R. Fitzgerald — "Fitz" — and I walked ahead to see if we could pick up some information. About a quarter of a mile along I saw an armored reconnaissance car, outgoing, stopped beside a house. The driver was leaning on the turret, his head in his arms. I walked over to him and asked, "Where are you going?"

"How the hell do I know?" he answered bitterly, without even looking up. "Just *out*."

The last two words forecast the trouble ahead.

Farther on, I awakened the sleeping occupants of a command car to ask where we were.

"Bastogne."

It meant nothing. Fitz shaded his flashlight and located the town on the map. We walked back to our trucks.

Then the incongruities really started. We received orders to move into a field near by. It was daylight when we completed our move, and we placed a few men on the ridges to act as lookouts. Not even the sound of distant artillery could be heard. The area we occupied assumed the appearance of an oversized picnic ground as the men built small fires to cook breakfast. A few miles away, actually, German armor was gathering momentum to roar down on Bastogne; but for all we knew, they could still have been in training outside Berlin.

No sooner had we settled down than instructions from regiment directed we move to a defensive position north of Bastogne. At midnight, just as were in position there, we were ordered to leave our newly-prepared holes and move back to act as the reserve force for the regiment.

At dawn the next day, Tuesday, December 19, we were alerted to counterattack to the north. Twice we started out to meet the enemy; twice subsequent orders canceled the attack. Finally, just about dusk, we returned to the area we had occupied the previous night as reserve. Thus our contribution for the first two days of the Battle of the Bulge consisted of a short stay in a defensive position, two false starts, and a return to our original spot. The men were not cheerful about this run-around, but at least they had something to talk about — a "does-he-know-whatinhell-he's-doing" conversation directed at me. That night it snowed.

The next day, Wednesday, the 20th, was quiet. The snow made us all uncomfortable, but at least we were able to build fires in our rear-area position. The fires, however, served only for warmth, for we had run out of food. To add to the pleas-

(*Continued on page 70*)

The Camera Eye

Few events on Earth and few people, great or merely odd, escape the camera's nimble probing

STILL HUNGRY—After gnawing at this impregnable soup bone for some time, both Chips, the pup, and Diana, the tot, turned it over to a large old Airedale.
INTERNATIONAL NEWS PHOTO

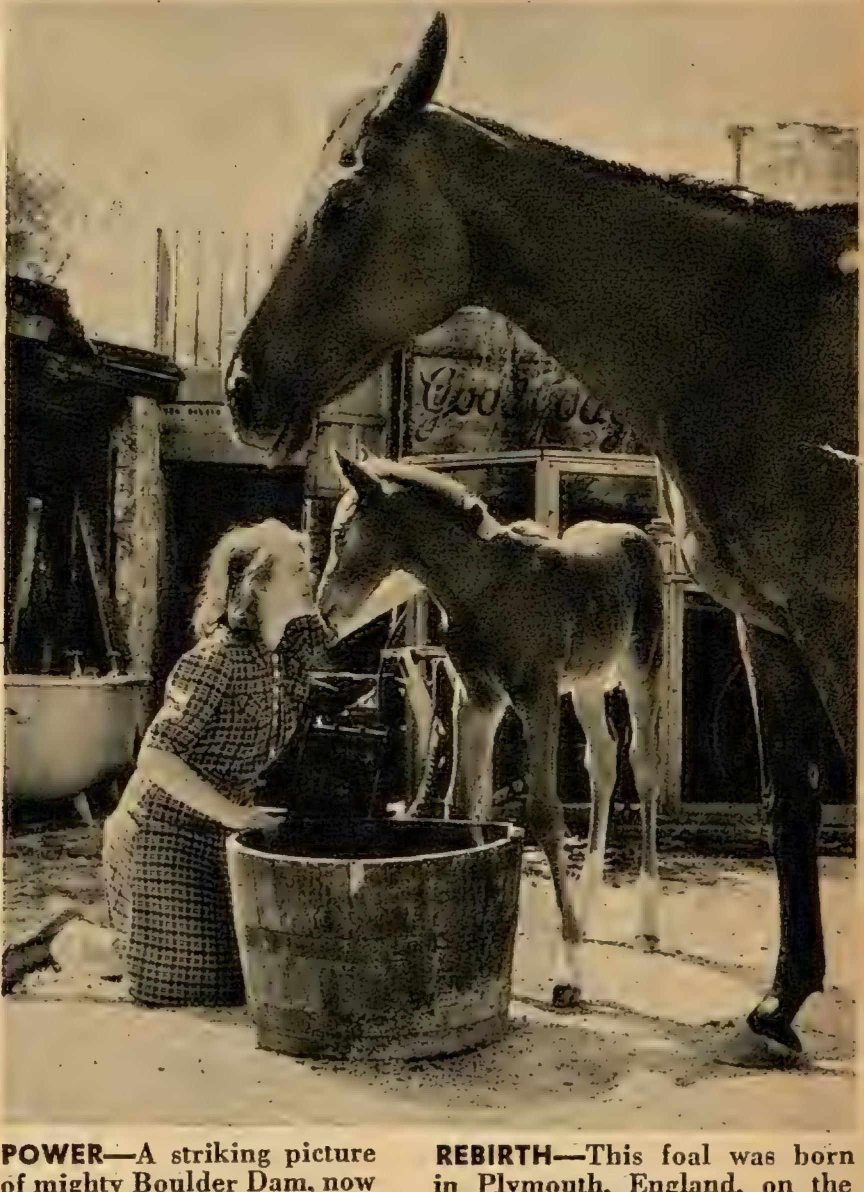
NO PADDING—The Alexian Brothers of Chicago work out in their cassocks. Here Brother Richard is being stopped as he tries to hurdle the center of the line.
INTERNATIONAL NEWS PHOTO

SUNKISSED—The camera's Florida eye glimpsed this comely bather taking her dose of vitamin D.

RAPHO-GUILLUMETTE

POWER—A striking picture of mighty Boulder Dam, now ten years old, as it looks under powerful floodlights.

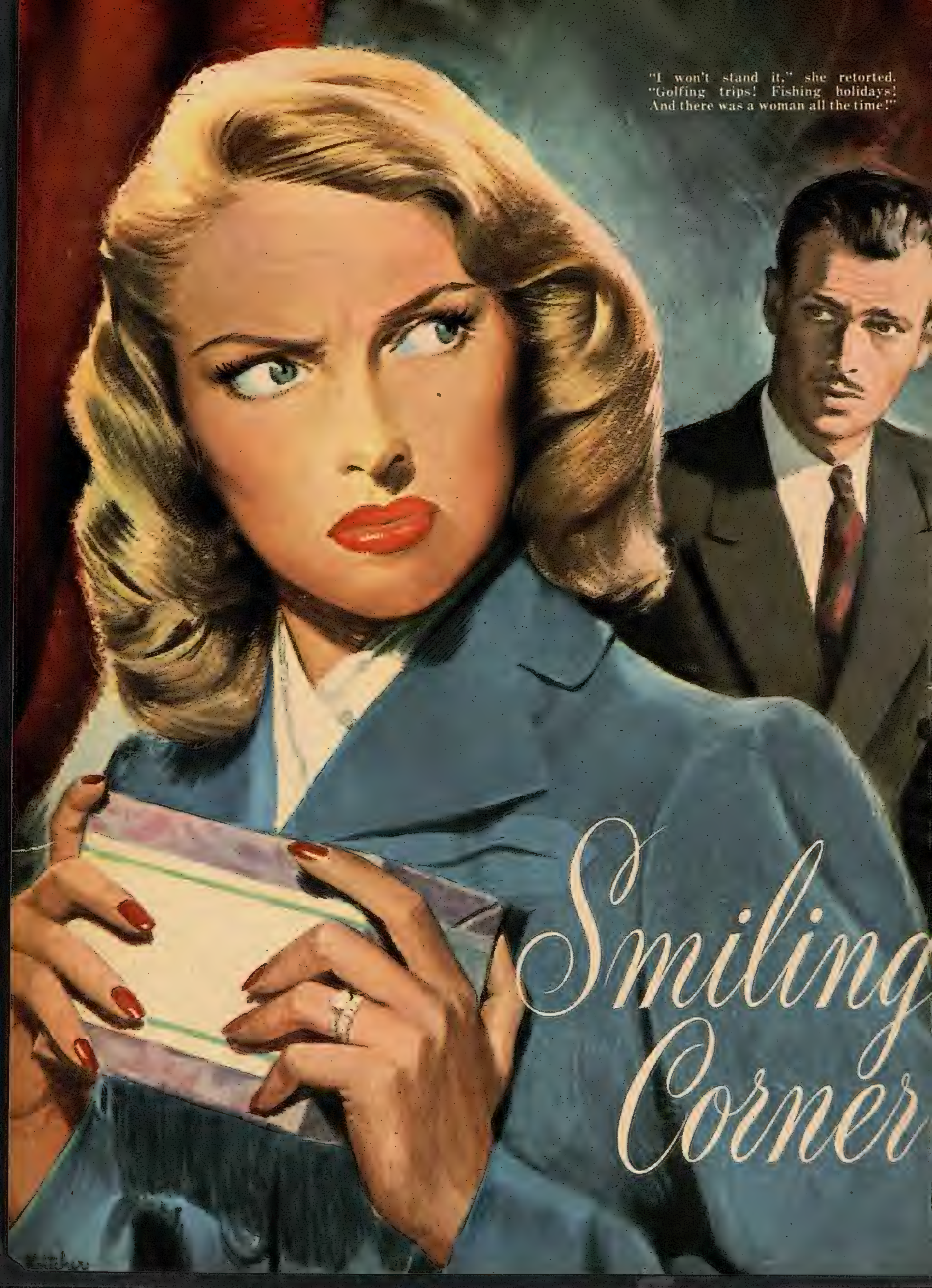
PRESS ASSOCIATION PHOTO



REBIRTH—This foal was born in Plymouth, England, on the site of a stable that was bombed out by the Nazis in the blitz.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS PHOTO

Smiling Corner



"I won't stand it," she retorted. "Golfing trips! Fishing holidays! And there was a woman all the time!"

BY LAURENCE KIRK

ILLUSTRATED BY LARRY KRITCHER

SOME wives who have made up their minds to go off with another man inform their husbands beforehand. Others do not. Morally, no doubt there are objections to both courses; but once the fatal decision has been made, it is tolerably obvious that a woman has to do one or the other.

Vivien Munro chose the latter alternative. She had three main reasons for the choice. First, she wanted to avoid the fruitless and distasteful argument which the former course was bound to involve. Second, she wanted a clean, quick break, with the evidence for the divorce already provided. And third, Andrew, her husband, was not there to tell. He was away in Scotland on a fishing trip and she did not even know his exact address.

Accordingly she just left a note for him saying she was going away for a few days and would write later. It was very much what he used to do with her—quite frequently, except that he used to telephone instead of writing. He was a stockbroker, and he would ring her up, generally on a Friday afternoon, and say that this mysterious fly had been heard of on the Test or Tweed or some other river; or alternatively —for he had two vices—that some golfing society was holding a meeting at Rye or Sandwich and would she mind very much if he went.

Of course she always said she did not mind in the least. What was a wife to say? If only he had gone running after some other woman, she would have known better how to deal with the situation—and bought new clothes to do it with.

Anyway, that was all over. This was her Friday. The note had been left with Molly, the Scotch maid; and then after Molly had gone off to the cinema with her betrothed, Clinton had called for her in his car and they had started off on their new life. Vivien did not know when Andrew would return and get the note. It might be the next day or next Sunday. Whenever it was, she intended to wait till about the following Wednesday before she wrote the fatal letter announcing that she had gone to live with Clinton Marr and would he kindly take divorce proceedings.

Meanwhile Providence was smiling on the adventure. It was a perfect late September day. There were a few black lines of plowing on the stubble fields, and the trees were turning to yellows and reds. Vivien's conscience was at rest, too. Andrew didn't need her, and Clinton did. It was as simple as that. If there was any fly in the amber of that autumn afternoon, it was that Clinton did not drive nearly so well as Andrew did. Moreover, while Andrew normally did not utter a word while he was driving, Clinton talked incessantly; not only about the iniquities of other drivers, but also about her personal comfort, which Andrew had always taken for granted. It was a pleasant change in many ways. But it was a very big change. Vivien wished a little that she did not choose menfolk who tended to such violent extremes.

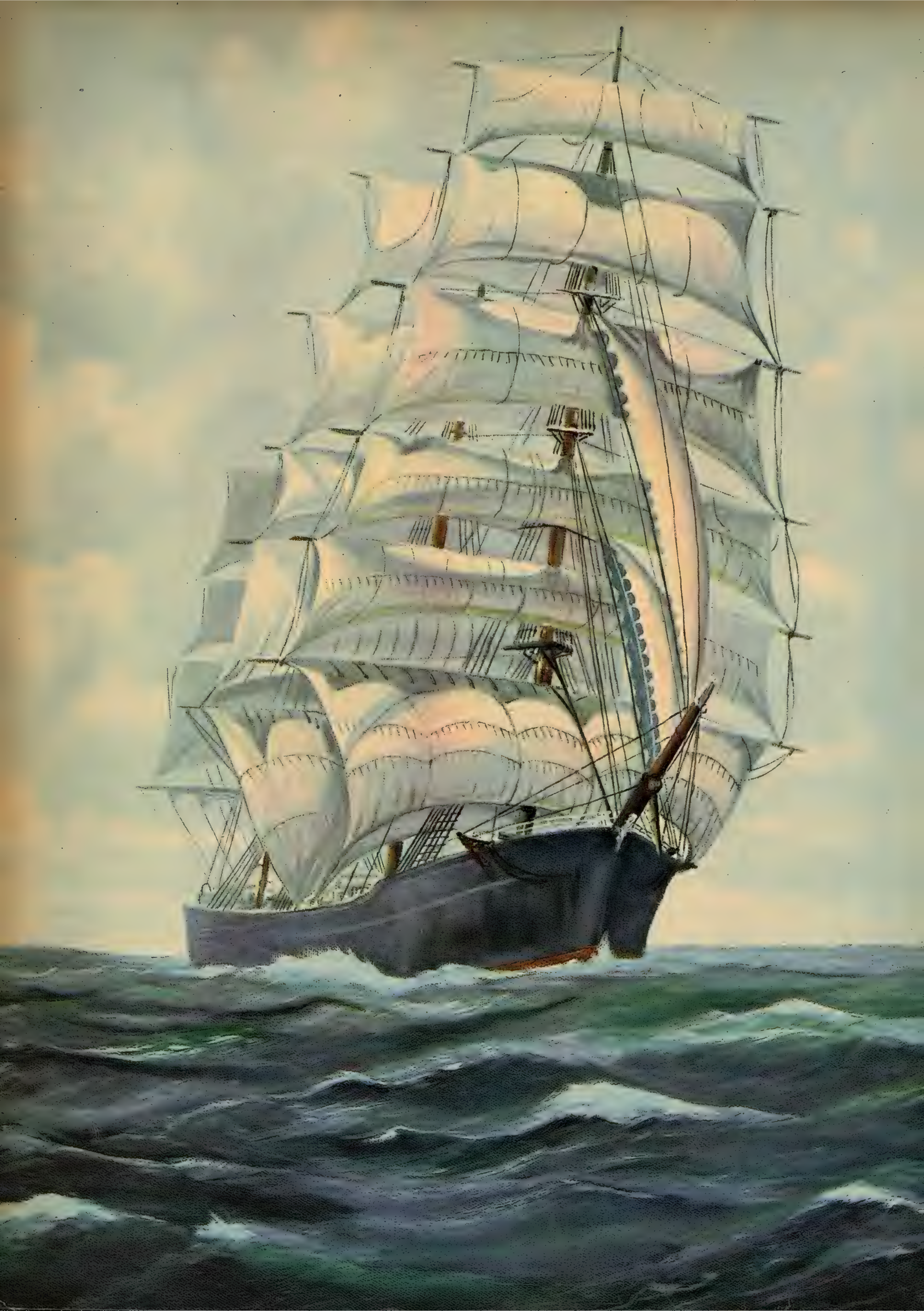
She had known Clinton, who was an architect, almost as long as she had known Andrew. He had been at their wedding five years ago. In fact, that ceremony might quite easily have united her to Clinton instead of Andrew. The main reason it did not was that Clinton, in spite of his well-groomed attentions and his classic profile, had never asked her at that period. Looking at him now, she could not help feeling some slight annoyance. It would have saved a lot of inconvenience and bother if Clinton had asked her then, instead of waiting till she had been married to somebody else for five years. Why didn't he, she wondered? The answer, which she was not to discover till later, was that everything in Clinton's life had to be just so. He regarded a woman as the final ornament in a man's life, and he was not ready to take her until he had collected the chairs and tables to go with her. If Vivien had not happened to fit in with these very carefully selected chairs and tables, as part of a suite, he would have asked somebody else.

THE drive took some two and three quarter hours and ended at a white gate near some cliffs on the Sussex coast. Clinton drove between the white gateposts, up a short steep drive, and there was the house, specially designed by Clinton himself, looking out over the sea. It was a beautiful situation with superb views in every direction. It was indeed so perfect that one could not help feeling that the sea and the cliffs had been designed to Clinton's exact specifications.

Vivien was just going to make some remark to this effect, (*Continued on page 74*)

A pound of tea delivered to a runaway wife

at her lover's house can be a fateful gift



Under Canvas Clouds

BY WILLIS LINDQUIST

Men still dream of rounding the Horn in a windjammer. Thanks to an old Finnish sea captain, that dream can still come true

IT may seem odd that this year 1946, of supersonic speeds, should see the rebirth of a cargo line made up entirely of superannuated, square-rigged sailing ships.

But there's more to this business venture than speed. There's the glamor of tall ships heeling to the gale, of royals straining at the trucks; dreams of adventure and hardships and danger—yes, and tears.

This fleet is the dream of Captain Gustaf Erikson, crusty old salt from the Finnish islands of Aland. Part of the dream is his belief that others want to dream with him, that the glamor of sail still lives in the hearts of men.

If you dream of rounding the Horn in a square-rigger, Captain Erikson's fleet gives you an opportunity to make that dream come true. The opportunity may last two, or five, or eight years. Then the antiquated windjammers will sink back into history.

To sail on Erikson's ships, it isn't necessary for you to know the truck from the keelson, or a buntline from a cable. Don't get the idea, however, that these are training ships. Nor are they dude ships in any sense of the word. All forty to fifty years old, they are made of steel, each one having three or four hollow steel masts and large cargo holds. They were the prizes and pawns of the first World War.

When that war came to an end, they became a glut on the market, for "they couldn't compete with steam." Captain Erikson, who had lived in sail all his life, decided to do something about it. Quietly he bought eleven of them, at scrap-value prices, and sent them to sea against the stiffest competition that [illegible] could offer. With all the odds stacked against him, he did the impossible for twenty years and made money at it.

World War II took a heavy toll of Erikson's fleet. When it ended, he had lost eight of the eleven. But at the age of seventy-three he was determined to build another empire in sail. He is starting with the four-mast barks Passat, Pommern, and Viking, which remained in the Baltic during the war.

He will man them, as usual, with a few Finnish sailors and with adventure-struck young men from all over the world. Most of his ships will again be on the Australian grain run. That's a nine-month trip around the globe which starts from the Iland Islands in the Baltic, or from Copenhagen, about the first of October. On this run the square-riggers beat across the North Sea, sail north of Scotland, and then stand southward through the Atlantic. Rounding the Cape of Good Hope, they cross the Indian Ocean and put in at Spencer Gulf in South Australia. This passage takes from ninety to 110 days. After a month or two, the return trip is made across the South Pacific, around Cape Horn and up to England, arriving there in June or July.

KEYSTONE PHOTO

Captain Gustaf Erikson, sailing's crustiest salt.

It's a hazardous voyage with long hours and backbreaking work for every member of the crew. Squalls strike suddenly. You're always sent aloft in the worst of it. Then there's the Horn with angry seas and contrary winds and icebergs that loom up suddenly in the dark.

But when you've rounded the Horn, the worst is over. Balmy trade winds bowl you along at a good eight or nine knots. You lie under the tropical stars, listening to the hum of the wind in the sails. You get to thinking of another trip. But then you remember the sour drinking water, the shriveled potatoes, the weavilly flour—and the mate. All mates, it seems, have the same dispositions as army sergeants.

It was a mate who was indirectly responsible for Soapy's fame. Soapy, an apprentice from New Zealand, got washed overboard during a storm off Cape Stiff, and swam for two weeks—some 2,000 miles—before he caught up with his ship.

At any rate, that was what Soapy said he did. There was no question about his being washed over the side. His shipmates saw him go. He disappeared in the heavy sea. But the next wave washed him up again on the afterdeck, and he scampered to the nearest door. It led to the ship's storeroom. Wet and exhausted, he found a comfortable corner behind a large bin and fell asleep.

He awoke, hours later, to hear the rollers still crashing on deck. He didn't feel much like going out in the storm again. Besides, he'd have to *face the mate.* No! He decided to stay where he was, with food and water almost within reach.

For two weeks he remained hidden, and then one day in the tropics the ship was becalmed. The storeroom became much too hot for comfort. Soapy crept out on deck. Over the break of the poop he saw the captain and the mate looking ahead for some sign of a breeze.

It was then that Soapy decided to become the most famous swimmer of all time. He lowered himself into the water, let the ship move on until he was thirty yards astern, and then started shouting.

The officers spotted him astern, swimming as though he were about to give out. "Captain!" he gasped reproachfully as they pulled him in. "You might have waited for me!"

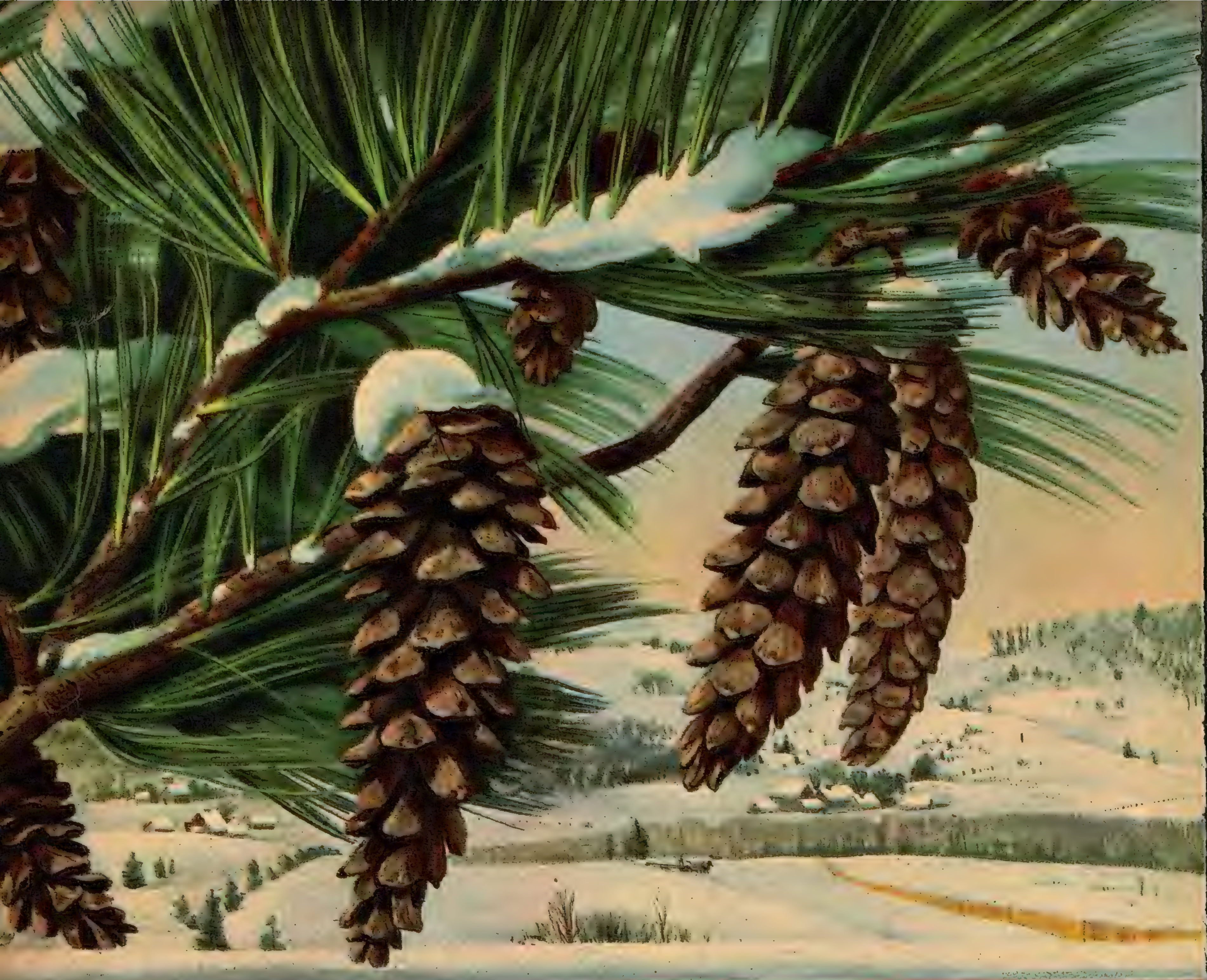
The food on Erikson's ships is far better than the fare served up on the windjammers of years ago. In other respects, sailing in these square-riggers is more rugged than ever, for the crews are smaller and the ships older. Nor are there any modern comforts such as electric lights and refrigeration for the galley. Fighting for the life of his fleet against the competition of steam, Erikson has had to keep down expenses. Before the war he was paying experienced seamen ten dollars a month. Apprentices, on the other hand, were charged $250 for the thrill of rounding the Horn in a square-rigger. Yet Erikson always had more men than he could use.

If you crave adventure under canvas clouds, address your letter to Captain Gustaf Erikson, Mariehamn, Aland Islands, Finland. It may take months to get a berth. But when you do, you'll skip back into the swashbuckling era of sail.

THE END

FROM A PAINTING BY OTTO KURTH

The Penang, 2,019-ton bark, built in 1905 in Bremerhaven, was the third of Captain Erikson's fleet to be sunk by the Nazis.



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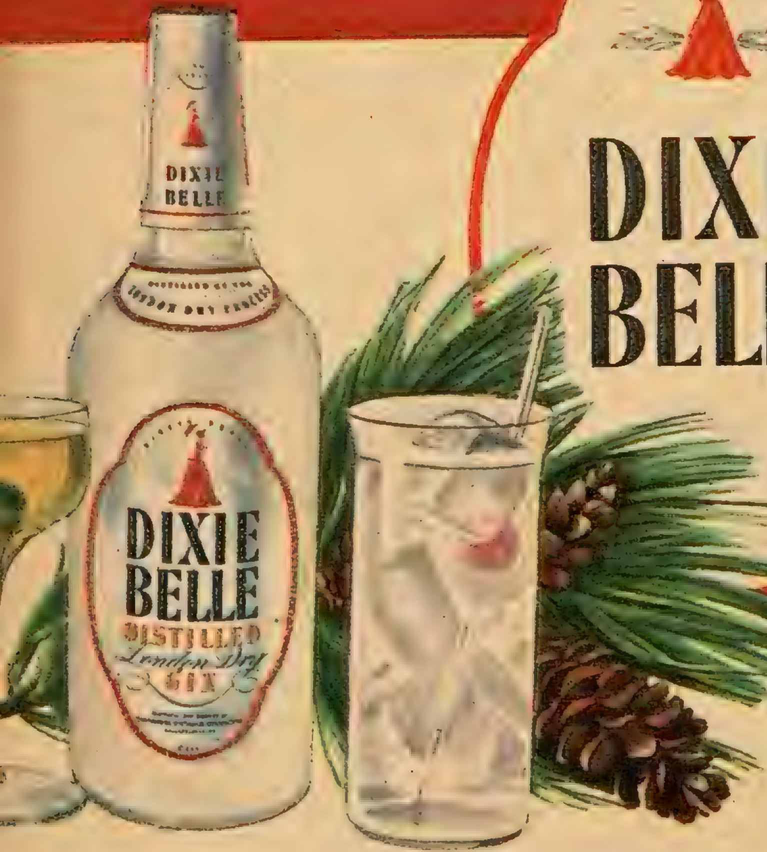

Among flowers, universal in their charm, there are outstanding favorites. So it is in gin! DIXIE BELLE has that over-all superiority which makes it a favorite. Suave bouquet, clean, bright flavor... expertly distilled from choice grain neutral spirits and Nature's finest fruits, herbs and berries. Truly a superb GIN

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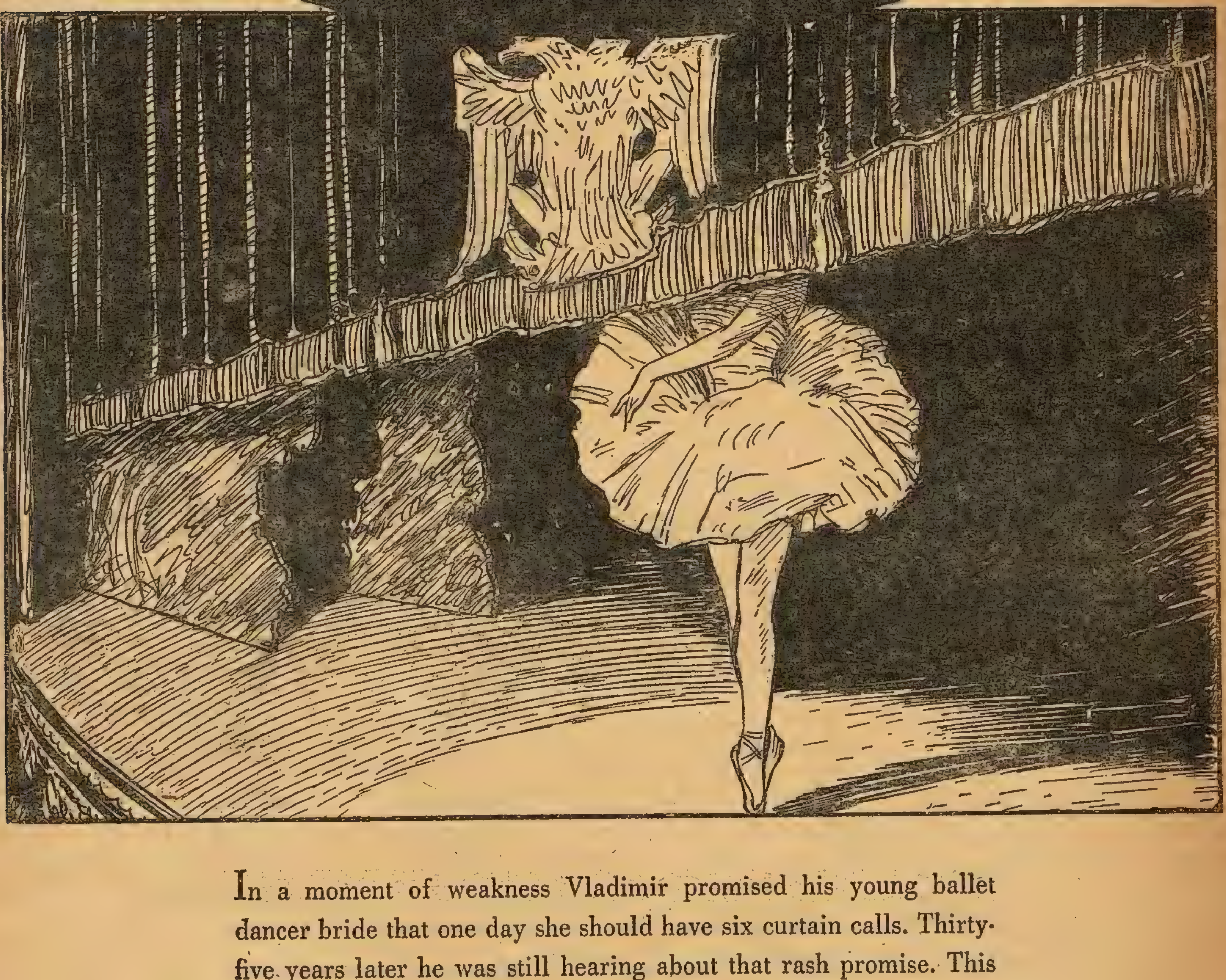
SIX CURTAINS *for* NATASHA

By Caryl Brahms and S.J.Simon



In a moment of weakness Vladimir promised his young ballet dancer bride that one day she should have six curtain calls. Thirty-five years later he was still hearing about that rash promise. This is a mad and merry story of the gay people of the Russian ballet.

ILLUSTRATED BY LAWRENCE BUTCHER

A LIBERTY BOOK CONDENSATION · READING TIME: ONE EVENING

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THE first curtain was all that a curtain should be. It came down slowly and gave the company plenty of time to line up, bow radiantly to the audience, and politely to one another. The house rose at them. It cooed, it shouted, it clapped, it waved its programmes.

After all, London had seen worse Coppélias than this—one or two.

The second curtain belonged to Swanhilda. The little Stroganova took it alone, banked in by bouquets, with more arriving. Roses and carnations from Mamoushka, orchids from Stroganoff, gladioli from the corps-de-ballet (deducted from the salary), rhododendrons from Arenskaya, forget-me-nots from the conductor.

But by the third curtain the going was heavier. The clapping waned. They brought on the conductor. He brought on the distinguished oboist. The clapping spurted, but it was only a spurt. They brought on Vladimir Stroganoff. He brought on his banker. It helped a little but not much.

By the fourth curtain a famous critic had stopped saying "Brava."

The fifth curtain was definitely grim. Little Stroganova still bowed herself dizzy but the Duchess was adjusting her furs, one balletomane had already reached the pass door and another was feeling for his hat.

And still they did not play "God save the King."

IN THE wings chaos had encroached on the congratulations.

"Non! Non! Non!" screamed Arenskaya, the temperamental maîtresse-de-ballet whose slightest shrill was law. "The curtain it stay where it is. Down."

"Oop! Oop!" screamed a little old woman in black, flapping her arms in the air as though willing it to levitate. But as this failed she turned on a stage hand. "Oop! Oop!" she commanded. "All my life I wait for this moment." Clearly she was a mother.

"Down," commanded Arenskaya.

"Oop," shrieked the mother.

Alone on the stage of the Collodeum Theatre the little Stroganova looked appealingly at them.

"Come! Come!" Arenskaya was beckoning.

"Stay where you am," the little black woman commanded. "Oop," she jerked the stage hand.

The stage hand disengaged himself. Who did they take him for? Solomon? He made off.

"Ah, good," said the mother. She pounced on the wheel. Arenskaya dragged her from it. They clawed.

A third pair of hands pulled the contestants apart. "My darlings," said Vladimir Stroganoff. "Calm yourself immediate—both. Is this the moment to dispute yourselves? Tonight of all nights, when we are in my dear London again, after the war so black, and make the opening triumphant and nearly enough moneys not to pay everyone. Non, non, non. Tomorrow you tear the hair in comfort, but tonight we are all the friends inseparable."

"She demand that the curtain go up," screamed Arenskaya accusingly.

"She demand that the curtain stay doon," accused the small black woman. "You hear, Vladimir! Only five curtains and she demand that it stay doon."

Stroganoff pondered. "My darlings, be reasonable. A curtain is not a thing that just go up and down. It has to be demanded."

"And I demand that it stay down," said Arenskaya.

"And I," said the little black woman, "demand that you keep the promise you made to me many years ago in St. Petersburg in the name of our poor dead Tzar."

"Oh, that old promise," said Arenskaya. "He spit him of his promise."

It was a mistake. Stroganoff drew himself up. "My word," he said, "is to me my bonds. Much better than my bonds," he remembered. "Ankara Tramways."

"What use to me is the broken promise?" demanded the small black woman. "All my life it bring me bad luck. In Yokohama there was the earthquake! In Buenos Aires Anton Palook he drop the ballerina in Giselle."

"That was his custom," said Arenskaya.

"Agreed," said the small black woman. "But this time," she quivered all over, "it is me!"

She rounded on Stroganoff. "You promised me six curtains, and until you keep your word there is nothing but the misfortunes for us both."

Stroganoff hesitated. In a moment she was confronting him like an infuriated goblin.

"Nu," she said, "does the curtain go oop, or do I?"

The curtain did.

Out on the stage the little Stroganova, caught unawares, bent herself double as graciously as her hurry would permit her. The applause seemed a little thin as she came up to be greeted by wave after wave of an empty crimson sea. The little argument that mamoushka had waged had taken a quarter of an hour and the only hands left to applaud belonged to the company's press agent. There was another man with him, but he was only raising a pair of sandy eyebrows.

"Down," said Arenskaya.

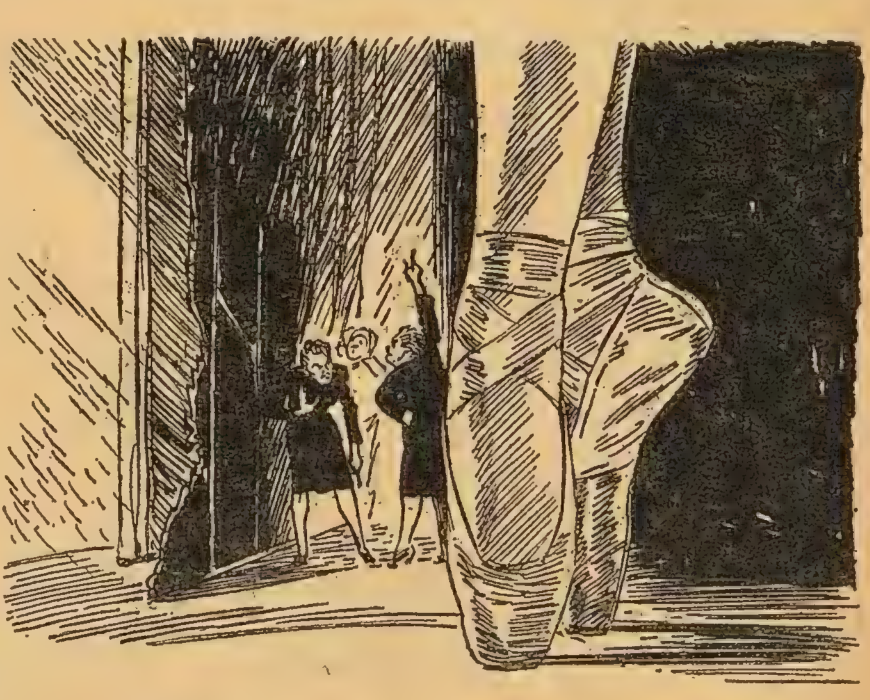
This time there was no argument.

STROGANOFF'S office was the busiest place in the Collodeum Theatre. This morning the impresario was seated at his desk looking over the notices of last night's Coppélia.

He read one and frowned. He read another and scowled. He read a third and tore it across.

"Mr. Stroganoff always reads all the notices himself," explained the press agent sunnily.

"Well?" Stroganoff turned expansively to the man with the sandy eyebrows. "What can I do for you, my friend? The interview with the little Stroganova?"



"Well . . . " said the sandy eyebrows.

"Good, it is arrange," said Stroganoff. "Take her to the Savoy. I book the table now." He reached for the telephone. "And if they give me again the one in the corner where I cannot be seen, I kick up the row."

"Don't do that," said the press agent uneasily. "Give the headwaiter a fiver."

Stroganoff pondered this. "It will be better if I give him tenner. You lend me?"

He stowed away a tenner from the press agent's wallet. "And now you do me the favour and go," he announced, "for soon there comes one from whom I will borrow mooch money. Very mooch." He rubbed his hands.

The man with the sandy eyebrows raised both.

"It is the finance intricate," explained Stroganoff. "My ballet needs money and the man who comes he has too mooch. It is fair that he lose a little."

He looked at his watch. "The rich one is late and it is not good that he should hear about money troubles. So you please me and go. Shoo!"

The press agent went quickly. But the man with the sandy eyebrows settled himself more comfortably. "Now, Mr. Stroganoff, I am not here to . . . "

The door opened. Two figures burst in, one a screaming ramrod, the other an offended steam-roller.

"There!" screamed Arenskaya. "Now we shall see what Stroganoff has to say."

"Together," said the steam-roller.

Stroganoff looked steadily out of the window. "I am busy," he said. "Go away."

"*You* are busy," said Arenskaya scornfully. "I suppose it is you who teach the classes, and see to the dresses, and make love to the electrician . . . the handsome one." She stopped reflectively.

The steam-roller seized her chance. "If," she said, "that skinny little piece of twopence nothing can take six curtains, then it is an outrage that my daughter, who it is well known can dance her head off, is not permitted to take even one."

"From the corps-de-ballet?" asked Arenskaya sweetly.

"The corps-de-ballet?" gasped the steam-roller.

"But yes," said Arenskaya. "I have put her there. This minute. No longer shall she dance the First Friend."

"Ha!" said the steam-roller. "I see! She dances the First Friend too well does my Lulu, is that it? She is getting too much attention. Is that it?"

"That is it," said Stroganoff, weighing in on the side of his lieutenant. "So you go quickly and do not plague me the fuss for I am busy, and later I will see to it that our good maîtress-de-ballet she relent."

"I relent," said Arenskaya. "She shall dance the Second Friend."

"See," said Stroganoff. "So now you go. Shoo!"

It was no doubt remarkable that when Stroganoff said "Shoo!" people should go, but somehow they did.

"These six curtains," said the man with the sandy eyebrows. "They seem to be causing you trouble."

"You tell me," said Stroganoff. "It seems to me at this moment that all my life has been spent with the trouble those six curtains give." He lit a cigarette.

"Sit down, my good friend," he said, "and I will tell about these six curtains. Make yourself comfortable, for it will take all morning."

"And the rich one?" asked the sandy man.

"He can wait. Today I must unpack my soul."

"IT begins," said Stroganoff, "in St. Petersburg in 1910. . . ."

It was Sunday night. It was snowing. At the Maryinsky Theatre the divine Trefilova was to dance the sugar plum fairy and the Imperial Court, glittering and scandalizing, had assembled to see her do it. Friends bowed cordially, enemies bowed stiffly. Everyone knew everyone else, and had for generations. A new face was an event, a slightly distressing event.

And tonight there were two of them sitting in the front row of the dress circle, a bald-headed young man and a girl bending raptly toward each other, an island of mutual admiration in a sea of encrusted hostility.

"There!" said the young man, "all is as I promised you. First, we are in Petersburg on our honeymoon. Second, your mamoushka is in Omsk. Third, we are going to have the complete holiday and forget the ballet. And last, we have the best seats in the Maryinsky!"

"Vladimir, you are wonderful," said the bride.

The conductor rapped with his baton on the gold stand. The house sprang, rustled and creaked to its feet. The Imperial box had filled with figures as glorious as the suns and moons of the universe. Behind them was Rasputin.

Light in the myriad chandeliers grew dim. Footlights glowed up. A voiceless ah! ran through the house, and Tchaikowsky's Christmas music gaily took possession of the auditorium. The curtain went up.

"Punctual," said Vladimir Stroganoff in awe.

To arrive at the Opera House, Omsk, to catch the eye of the boss, to dance Raymonda, Coppélia and the Peri within six months, to marry the boss in seven, to come to the capital on your honeymoon, with mamoushka weeping and definitely left behind, and to sit in the front row of the Grand Circle of the Maryinsky, watching Trefilova dancing the familiar and yet so different Sugar Plum—it was altogether too much. Long before the end of the third act Natasha Stroganova was in tears.

She reached for her husband's hand. "Vladimir, what is the use? I shall never dance better than this."

"Mooch better," said Stroganoff absently. He gazed entranced at the stage.

"But I am mad," said Natasha, pulling herself together. "Of course I will dance better. Or at least as well."

"Sssh," said the generals on either side of them, simultaneously.

The ballet drew towards its brilliant close.

"That one," said Stroganoff as a girl like a frozen flame vanished into the wings, "that one has promise."

In a shower of "Brava! Brava! Bis!" Pavlova came back to take her bow.

"She is good," said Natasha. "But her soul is not yet awake."

"You are wrong, my pigeon," said Stroganoff softly. "The soul of that one will never sleep."

"Sssh," said the generals on either side of them.

"Ssh, ssh," said the general behind.

For now the finale was triumphantly achieved.

"Brava! Brava! Bis!" cried the two seats, as Trefilova took one, two, three, four curtains. And at the fifth Natasha turned to the applauding impresario beside her. "Five curtains, Vladimir. Did you count? Five."

"Why not," said Stroganoff. He went on clapping.

"I must do better. Vladimir," Natasha turned starrily, "when I am Ballerina Assoluta I shall have six."

"A thousand, my darling," said Stroganoff obligingly, the impresario sunk in the adoring husband.

"AND that," Stroganoff told the sandy man, "was the beginning of all my troubles. For though I promise without reflecting and forget the next instant, my wife she remind me the next morning. And the morning after. And every day while we are married and long after that." He sighed.

"I made a promise once," said the sandy man reflectively. "In writing." He shook his head.

"Still," said Stroganoff, "if the promise begin my troubles, it also begin my success. For, were it not for that, I would not be the great impresario, famous, powerfull and rich." He stopped abruptly. "Sometimes," he added.

"Quite," said the sandy man. He smiled.

"But we are back in Petersburg," said Stroganoff, "and presently I am arguing with General Dumka—the one who go 'Ssh!' all the time. You would hardly credit it, my friend, but to the last Dumka maintained that Dourakova was a purer Sugar Plum than the divine Trefilova." He kissed his fingers.

"TO Dourakova," said General Dumka. He raised his glass of champagne and drank.

"To Trefilova," said Stroganoff. He drank and plonked his glass defiantly on the table.

"To all our dear friends in Omsk," said Natasha and burst into tears.

Almire Cubat, cruising benevolently round his fashionable restaurant, condescended to glance at the weeping lady and raised a slightly puzzled eyebrow.

"Madame is a little distressed," explained Dumka. "She weeps because she is not yet Assoluta—she wants to be first ballerina."

"Ah, yes," said Cubat. "My best wishes to Madame." He bowed and drifted off to welcome Trefilova, a bank of roses, standing in the entrance.

"Oh, Almire," said Trefilova, "I am so unhappy. My variation tonight. It was like a circus girl. Oh, how could I dance like that!"

Through the restaurant progressed a broad-shouldered man. He bowed, but he did not smile. He was Sergei Diaghilev, bearing the fruits of his first Paris triumph. With him was a coterie of young artists. Benois, Bakst, Fokine, Stravinsky, Nouvel and P. Puthyk.

"Your health, Madame," General Dumka was saying. "And may we see you dancing in our capital soon."

"Oh," said Natasha. The idea planted itself.

"The time will come," said Stroganoff proudly. "For the moment, you understand, Omsk has need of her."

"Omsk," said Dumka. Not for the first time that evening his monocle fell out.

Down the restaurant pranced a dark, petite, heavily perfumed young girl, clearly a dancer, for behind, beside, and in front of her bobbed a foam of balletomane generals. She was Arenskaya.

Two generals dead-heated to pull out her chair. Three more reached for her furs. Arenskaya shook her curls at them and turned her attention to the company at large. There was Trefilova weeping into her coffee. Naturally, after that performance. There was Pavlova—crying buckets, that one! And there was Kyasht, blonde, dimpling and not a tear in sight. Arenskaya pranced over.

"My darling," she said, "but you were divine, and not nearly so fat as all have been whispering. No, no." She pranced back. She stole a glance. Kyasht was weeping all right.

"Champagne," said Arenskaya well pleased.

And the little Natasha looked and looked at the glittering, modish, eating, drinking, singing, weeping, laughing company before her. How wonderful it all was. If only she belonged.

She wept.

"VLADIMIR," said Natasha, "do you love me?"

"My darling," said Stroganoff. He stretched out his nightshirted arms.

"Then," said the bride, dodging nimbly, "you will arrange that I dance in Petersburg."

"We will see," said Stroganoff, side-stepping after her.

But Natasha buttoned up her dressing-gown and crouched over the log fire, her mouth set.

"My darling," said Stroganoff gently, "do not look like that. It reminds me of your mamoushka." He put his hands on her shoulders. She shook them off.

Stroganoff gazed wistfully round the richly decorated bridal suite of the newest hotel in St. Petersburg. Of what use all this luxury if his little pigeon fastened her dressing-gown?

"My little snowflake," he said, "melt a little."

The snowflake looked reproachful. "Vladimir, how can you refuse me anything at a moment like this?"

She undid a button. Not a very important button.

"What say you," suggested Stroganoff, playful but diffident, "that I pick you up in my arms like a little feather and carry you to the bed?"

"No. Not till you agree to present me in St. Petersburg."

Stroganoff resigned himself. He crossed to the samovar and brought back two tumblers of tea.

"My darling," he said. "We are very well in Omsk. We have the Opera with the three performances a week. You are famous and my papoushka is rich and for the moment can defray the deficit."

"Omsk," said Natasha, "is not St. Petersburg."

"Assuredly. In St. Petersburg there is no new apartment, which you have so tastefully furnished and for which the papoushka does not yet know how much he has to pay."

"Your papoushka," said Natasha, "is very rich. But also he is very rude. He called my mamoushka a cow."

"Console yourself, my darling. He meant only that the cow is the mother of the graceful little calf."

Stroganoff made to change the subject. "In Omsk," he said, "we stage all the great ballets and where else can you dance Giselle?"

"In St. Petersburg," said Natasha.

"Ha, so now she persuades Pavlova to abdicate! Proceed, my pigeon. I will watch you with interest."

His little pigeon pummelled his chest. "You are a brute, Vladimir Stroganoff, a tyrant, a boor! And a drunkard," she added for luck. "And why you have not yet beaten me I cannot understand."

"Me neither," he said mildly.

"Vladimir Stroganoff, you bring me to Petersburg with my company, and with my mamoushka and," she remembered something, "my six curtains or else . . . "

IT was Omsk. It was four weeks later.

"Vladimir," said Natasha, "promise me . . ." She was in her dressing-room, the star's dressing-room, gazing critically into her mirror while mamoushka stitched the ribbons of her ballet shoes—no chances were to be taken tonight.

For Natasha was dancing Giselle for the first time, and the Opera House was crowded—well, fairly full.

"Now do not unquiet yourself," said Stroganoff. "You will have the success triumphant. You are delicious." He kissed her cheek.

"Vladimir," said Natasha, "promise me something . . ."

"Yes, my little angel," said Stroganoff fondly.

"Promise me you will speak to papoushka . . ."

Affection vanished. "After the performance."

In the auditorium of the Opera House the lights went down. The conductor mounted his rostrum and bowed.

Aliosha Stroganoff never missed a performance of his ballet. Neither did his banker. But their reasons were different.

"Seven hundred roubles in the house," the banker said. "Hardly enough to cover the salaries."

Aliosha smiled at him. "Abram, Abram," he shook a playful finger, "here is my daughter-in-law dancing Giselle for the first time and my um . . . discovery dancing the Queen of the Wilis and you talk to me about money. No, no, Abram—it is not the moment."

"It is never the moment not to talk about money," said the banker, shocked.

"Sssh—there she is, my Katusha," said Aliosha. He gazed enamoured at the stage. "Third from the left in the back row. Charming—no? And she dances well too."

The performance went on. Giselle emerged from her cottage, all blushes and palpitations. The House took kindly to Natasha. She was young, she was pretty to look at, her pointes were not very strong, but what would you, you could not expect a Pavlova at Omsk. But as for the Prince! Were there not less knowledgeable cities? Vladivostok, for example. Why didn't he go there?

"That one," said the banker as the Prince leapt, but not very high, into the air, "that one is no Nijinsky."

The dancer who was no Nijinsky came down again. He looked round for the ballerina. He managed to catch up with her.

Vladimir Stroganoff dashed into his papoushka's box. "She is superb—no? You are happy, yes?" He dashed out again.

The ballet creaked on. The Princess arrived with her customary thirst. Giselle's scolding old Mother helped to slake it. Gratified, the Princess bestowed some pearls on Giselle. Overjoyed Giselle danced.

"Oh, my darling," moaned mamoushka in the wings. She went on crossing herself for the next three minutes.

After the twenty-minute intermission had lasted but three-quarters of an hour, Act II began.

"Now," said Aliosha, as the Queen of the Wilis came plodding on, "now you will see something." And he leaned forward, screening the stage from the banker. "My Discovery," he gloated.

"She doesn't dance very well," said the banker, peering over Aliosha's shoulder.

"She is very pretty. No one can take that from her."

"And," said the banker, "she has had the sense to prefer the rich father."

"And why not?" said Aliosha. "At my age I do not expect them to love me."

On the stage Giselle was borne to her grave. . . .

"AH, the emotions of that Giselle," Stroganoff gazed at the ceiling. "The packed house. The cheering audience. The enthusiastic critics. And me, I am everywhere, and all the time I am talking, talking, talking."

"Sure," said the sandy man.

"For in those days, you must understand I am young and hoping," said Stroganoff. "I had not then the pessimism that you see with me today." He sighed heavily. "For what have I to look for now? Only the worries and the exasperation. If all go well it is the artists' talent, if bad, it is the fault of the management. And also, there is the finance. Always the finance." He sagged.

"There is the rich one," said the sandy man.

"That one! He will be fat and bloated and already he will be complaining. Also he will ask me many questions, and all about money. Every time I spend the sou he will look at the books. He will have a little friend whom his wife has not met, and for whom I must find the small solo. And even if he give me all the moneys I need, what is there new that I can do with them? I can take a bigger theatre." He dismissed it. "I can engage Markova, Dolin, Danilova and Franklin. With them I could go to Covent Garden and," he brightened, "what is more, I could fill it. And after this triumph I go straight to the Metropolitan, New York. Tell me, my friend, with what ballet do you think we should open there?"

"Er," said the sandy man. . . .

"OOF," said Stroganoff. He looked round. His little love-nest bore the air of a room that had held far too many people in it far too long. Smoke draped the ceiling, deflated cushions littered the floor.

Natasha's first-night party was over at last. Stroganoff had invited almost the entire company and others had come, anyway. It had been a triumph and toast after toast had been drunk to the heroine of the occasion.

"To your four curtains, my darling," said Stroganoff. "No one in Omsk has taken more."

"When I am in St. Petersburg," said Natasha distinctly, "I shall have six."

Now the guests were all gone. Stroganoff had seen them into their droshkies and exploded back at the neighbours and come in and closed the door.

"Oof," he said, and sat down.

Natasha had savoured her triumph, and now it was time to think of the future.

"Vladimir," she pointed to the stomach rising and falling in front of the fire. "Now is the moment."

Stroganoff backed a little. "But no. Papoushka is tired. See how he slumbers. Tomorrow, my little pigeon."

"Tonight," said Natasha grimly.

A log fell out of the fire. The sleeping father blinked awake and heaved himself to his feet.

"It is time that I was in bed," he said. "Where is my Katusha?" He looked round.

"She has gone home long ago," said Natasha. "And Vladimir wishes to speak to you." She pushed him back into the chair. "It is very important."

But Aliosha shook his head. "It is already half-past five. When I was Vladimir's age and like him married but two months, I did not wish to sit up talking to my papoushka. Oh, no." He wagged a finger. "I remember one night on my honeymoon . . ."

"Good night, papa," said Natasha. "Listen to Vladimir." She kissed him and withdrew.

Stroganoff tugged at his tie. "Papa." He gulped. "I have a scheme for making the fortune colossal."

"Aie," said the Papa. "And at such an hour."

"Papoushka," said Stroganoff, "you have given me much: the first-class education, the theatre of my own, my wife, my home. I am grateful and now I wish to pay back all the moneys you have spent on me."

Late though the hour was, Aliosha looked startled. "My son," he said, "did I hear you aright?"

"I wish to pay you back," said Stroganoff clearly and loudly. "But this I cannot do in Omsk."

"Oho!" Aliosha could not see yet where he was being led, but his instinct was warning him that he wouldn't like it.

"You have given me a splendid company," said Stroganoff. "And a prima ballerina!" He kissed his fingers. "But here in Omsk there is no audience that is worthy of them. So let us take them to a place where there is one that will be."

"Nijni-Novgorod?" asked Aliosha.

"Nijni-Novgorod, pfui! There is in all the Russias only one city worthy of my company and my Natasha. St. Petersburg."

"Aie!" said Aliosha.

The Stroganoffs mopped their brows.

"Come, my papoushka," pleaded the son, "let us look at this with logic. We have the company superb on which you have spent much moneys. But we also have the town that cannot give it back to you. What, then, is the logic?"

"To disband the company," said the papoushka.

"No," said Stroganoff, "to take it to St. Petersburg." He tried the personal angle. "Natasha has too much talent to waste in the provinces. And also she gives me no peace."

"Abram gives me no peace either," said Aliosha.

"But, papoushka," pleaded Stroganoff, "do you not wish to see your son in St. Petersburg?"

"No. Do you think," papoushka coined a phrase, "that I am made of roubles? No and no and no!"

"NO and no and no," said Abram the banker. "Aliosha I cannot permit that you ruin yourself."

"It is my money," Aliosha said, "and if I choose to make a legitimate speculation that is my business."

"If this son of yours cannot make money in Omsk, how can he succeed in St. Petersburg?"

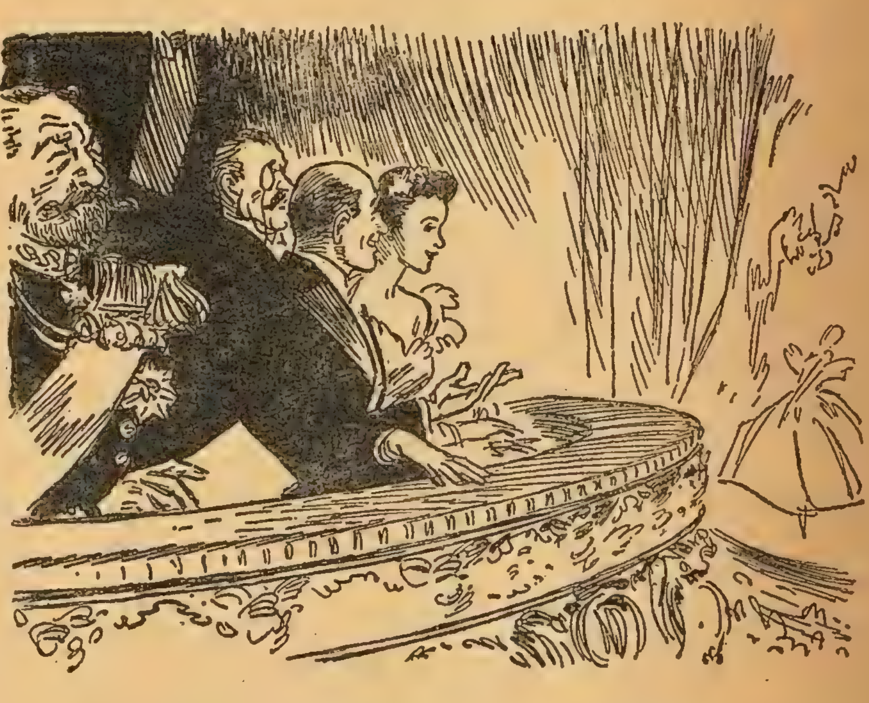
"Omsk is a small town and has but little culture."

"Omsk," said the banker, "is the most progressive town in all the Russias." He shot his cuffs. "Have we not installed water pumps in all the side streets? Are we not to have the tramway soon?"

"Abram," wheedled Aliosha, "give me back my money."

"No and no and no," said the banker.

Aliosha drew himself up. "Very well then, I shall go to my father." He waddled out. He remembered something. He put his head round the door. "May he live many years yet," he said piously.



Moysha Stroganoff was ninety-one. He spent his days snoozing in front of the fire and his thoughts ranged vaguely round all the people who had owed him money many years ago and had not paid him back.

For Moysha had been one of the money-lenders at the Court of St. Petersburg and had done so well that practically the whole of it was in his debt. In fact, so many well-bred people were so deeply in his debt that there was only one thing for him to do. It was to go somewhere else. He went to Omsk. And there he had lived ever since. He and his son, and his son's son.

A devoted family, the Stroganoffs. . . .

"But, papoushka," said Aliosha pleadingly, "listen a little. Put aside your knitting and listen."

"My son, I am too old to listen," said Moysha. "And what can you have to say that I have not already heard many times?" He dangled a mass of red wool. "See, a sock for my son's son's son—when he has one."

Aliosha joked, "Will he then have only one foot?"

"My son, you are a fool," said Moysha. "And also you have too much stomach. When I was but sixty-three I did not have a stomach. Nor have I yet."

"Papoushka, when you were sixty-three you had a young, clever, loving son. Me. When I came to you for money to begin business you gave it. You grumbled a little, but you gave it. And now I am richer than you."

"Ah," said Moysha, "but you have not as much monies as others owe me." He looked wistfully at his files.

"Papoushka," said Aliosha, "listen to me."

"Speak up. Can't hear a word you say."

"Will you help me?" said Aliosha loudly.

"Out with it, son," said Moysha. "However disgraceful it may be."

Aliosha produced a gold pencil. He opened his notebook. He wrote, "Will you find the finance to send Vladimir's ballet to St. Petersburg and my Katusha?" On second thought he crossed the second item out.

The old man put on spectacles. He held the notebook upside down.

"Do you think that I am made of roubles? No and no and no. And no," he added to clinch it.

"AND after this," said Stroganoff to the sandy man, "it will be clear to you, my friend, that now all is agreed and that soon we will be on our way to St. Petersburg."

AS this was a business trip, Stroganoff took the business-man's train, the Trans-Siberian Express—all the way from St. Petersburg to Vladivostok in under ten days. An average speed of thirty miles an hour! No need to bring your own food, for there was a restaurant car. No need to leave the train from start to finish, except, of course, at Irkutsk, where you and your luggage and your relations got into another train with a new set of as yet untipped attendants.

And the cost of all this luxury was only double the ordinary fare.

Well worth it, as Stroganoff explained to the comfortably stomached stranger. "Particularly," he added beaming, "as my papoushka pays."

"So you have the rich father," said the stranger. This plausible, bald-headed young man was by no means the first confidence-trickster he had met on the Trans-Siberian Express.

"My little father," Stroganoff boasted, "is the richest man in Omsk save one—my little grandfather. We are the ballet."

"Ballet," said the stranger, who had a reason of his own (a plump little reason, at the moment poised rather uncertainly in the first row of the corps-de-ballet at Vladivostok) for being interested in the subject. "You have a ballet in Omsk?"

"Omsk," said Stroganoff, "is a very cultural town."

Some of the wariness left the stranger. He opened a basket and passed over the leg of a chicken. Stroganoff produced a hip-flask. They feasted together.

"In what other Opera in all the Russias," Stroganoff boasted, "will you find a company like ours? Our conductor!" He kissed his fingers. "Our prima ballerina!" He kissed them twice. "I tell you, my friend, she is the little Pavlova, the Trefilova in miniature. And also she is my wife. Soon we will be in St. Petersburg and my little pigeon will be the toast of the town.

"My theatre in Petersburg will be of marble," he went on, "with gilt on the domes and angels on the ceiling. There will be boxes. Many boxes, for all the world of fashion will wish to subscribe and to be seen. The jewels!" He shielded his eyes.

"H'm," said the stranger. The plump little reason had strong views on jewels.

"The dressing-rooms will be warm, the stage vast, and there will be the foyer luxurious with a ceiling of gold and marble pillars and pictures of my ballerinas on the walls and maybe a picture of myself."

"And where," asked the stranger, dazzled, "will you find this—this palace?"

"My friend," said Stroganoff, "I have found it already. My little grandfather has given it to me."

"He has many interests in the capital?"

"Well," said Stroganoff. He considered. "There are many people there that owe much to him."

"Influential," said the stranger. "I see." His voice took on a note of deep respect.

"Big influence. It is this that get me the theatre. The little grandfather, he influence the man who own it. He demand that he pay back the note of his grandfather's hand. So we get the theatre suitable. But the owner does not wish to pay his grandfather's note of hand all at once so, for the moment, we get it for three nights a week and every other Sunday."

"I see," said the stranger. He didn't.

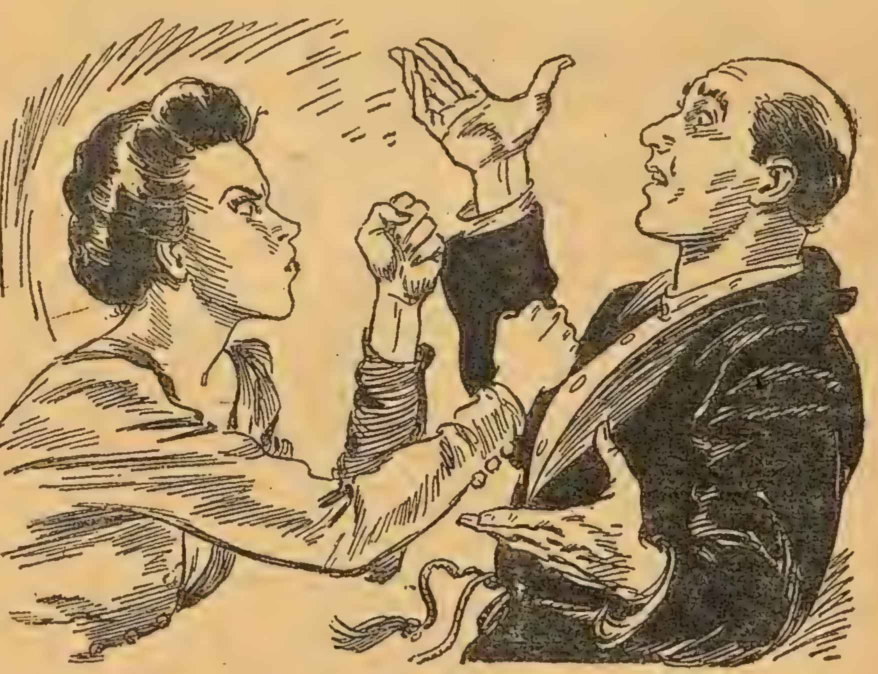
"On the other nights there is some other company, and that one pays with money to the owner."

"And this other company?"

"They are the finest in all Russia," said Stroganoff. "No doubt. I do not yet know what they play, but it is probably the Racine and the Oscar Wilde. It is most important that the company who share my theatre shall also share my high artistic standard. For you understand that I shall assemble around me not only the talent of Omsk but the entire intelligentsia of the capital."

VLADIMIR STROGANOFF paced up and down what he hoped was the right railroad platform. This was the hour when his company was to arrive from Omsk.

Two weeks in the capital had wrought a deep change in our optimistic impresario. It had been a terrible two weeks. Getting the company together had proved a nightmare. Old General Dumka had rushed around, promising and pleading, but either the ballerina approached had already signed with Diaghilev or she said "Omsk" and changed the conversation. Only the celebrated Arenskaya had signed with Stroganoff. Men were easier to find, indeed, a number had been engaged, but they were no Nijinskys, and, as Stroganoff fiercely pointed out, he had one of these already.



Whether it was dancers or painters or composers or dressmakers, there was always the same obstacle—Sergei Diaghilev.

For ever since Diaghilev had come back from Paris, where the triumph of his Russian opera and ballet had started a fashion, all St. Petersburg had been dazzled—save the bankers. Last year Diaghilev had conquered Paris, this year it was to be Europe. And everybody wanted to be in on it—save the bankers.

Paris, thought Stroganoff. Poof! What was Paris? Europe! What was a European tour? What wouldn't he give to have one of his own? Instead of the theatre of his little grandfather!

The theatre magnificent! Ha!

Stroganoff tried to think of something else. Soon he would see his Natasha and clasp her in his arms. She would ask him many questions. He grew depressed again.

A certain excitement became noticeable on the platform. With a triumphant hoot the engine pulled up. Natasha's little head was bobbing out of a carriage window. Stroganoff's troubles dropped from him and he sprinted towards it.

"My darling, it is a hundred years," Stroganoff embraced his bride.

"Vladimir, Vladimir," said the smothered Natasha.

"Mind her hat," said mamoushka.

"Come, come, let us eat," said papoushka. He linked himself on to Katusha, his beloved.

A warming reunion. But in one more sentence it was over.

"And now," said Natasha on tiptoe with excitement, "take me to see my theatre."

A finger of frost touched Stroganoff's spine. "Presently, my darling," he said. "Presently. But first we have the breakfast delicious."

"I am too excited to eat. Let us go now!"

"You are tired, my darling," said Stroganoff.

"Come," said papoushka, "let us eat."

"No," said Natasha firmly. "I must go to my theatre at once." She stamped her foot. "At once, Vladimir."

"At once," said the mamoushka. She started.

"We come, too," said the rest of the company.

There was a line of droshkies outside the station. The company collared the lot, loaded on their luggage, piled themselves inside, and, a stream of triumph, jingled their way into the heart of the city.

"We must be nearly there," said the man who was no Nijinsky expectantly.

"It is very far, this theatre," said mamoushka suspiciously.

"It is a very slow driver," said Stroganoff quickly.

"Look," said Little Igor, a dancer quite new to the company, pointing to a poster showing a trainer about to pounce on a lion. "A circus! I must go."

They jingled on. And they jingled on some more and eventually they reached the theatre.

The Theatre Boris Goudonov had been triumphantly constructed many years ago. The cluster of golden mushrooms that formed the roof had glistened when the paint was new, and everybody's grandparents on the opening night had marvelled at the enormous shining chandeliers, the drinking fountain in the vestibule and the crimson plush of the seats.

But that was nearly a hundred years ago. Now the gold had turned green, the paint was peeling, and St. Petersburg had meanly chosen other spots as its fashionable quarters.

But the company from Omsk was eager to be impressed. All save the mamoushka.

"Ah," they said. "Ah," they said again.

"It is very large," said Little Igor loyally.

A FASHIONABLE figure was making its way down the unswept stairs. Long-stemmed roses burgeoned from its arms. It was General Dumka.

"A thousand pardons," he bowed low to Natasha. "Nothing but business of the most urgent would have kept me from welcoming you at the station." He presented the flowers.

"The auditorium," Stroganoff said hopefully.

The company gasped. All those seats! All that plush!

"The company that play the Racine and the Wilde," said Little Igor doubtfully, "they draw the town?"

"My friend," said General Dumka, "they pack the house."

"Vladimir," said the mamoushka, peering along the edge of the stage. "What is this that looks like sawdust?"

"Sawdust," said Stroganoff firmly.

They went backstage.

"Here, my darling," said Stroganoff, arriving outside a vermilion door. "Your dressing-room. The star's dressing-room," he added, and flung it open.

Inside was the ballerina Arenskaya. She was well installed. She must have brought all her possessions, including a baby sea lion that howled immediately.

"Pardon." Stroganoff made to close the door.

But Arenskaya was on her feet and cooing over Natasha. So does a serpent coo at a rabbit.

"Ah," she said, "the little one from Omsk. But your traveling hat is charming—charming. I had one just like this last year! I am sorry now that I have given it to the maid—she does not know how to wear it, that one."

Natasha looked around for her mamoushka. But the mamoushka was in the corridor frowning at what looked exactly like an elephant.

"Pardon," said Stroganoff quickly, "I make the introduce. My little wife. Our new friend Arenskaya, who has come to the company."

"As Ballerina Assoluta," said Arenskaya sweetly. "We will be the great friends. Watch me closely and you will learn much, my dear. They tell me that already you show much promise."

Once again Natasha looked round for her mamoushka. But mamoushka was still gazing at what still seemed to be an elephant. So Natasha joined battle alone.

"You are very kind," she said, "and I am very cross with Vladimir that he did not tell you this was the dressing-room of the star. Now you have all the trouble of moving."

"Vladi-mir!" The voice of the mamoushka floated sharply into the room. Once and for all she meant to decide was this, or was this not an elephant.

"Quick." Stroganoff raced his little bride in the opposite direction and they mounted a flight of stairs. "I take you to your dressing-room," he panted. "It is the real star's dressing-room."

"Above stage level? So?" said Natasha, her little mouth set.

Stroganoff flew her along a corridor flanked with tanks with fishes in them. At the other end of it was the coming-up mamoushka.

"Vladimir," she pointed to a tank. "Is that, or is that not, an octopus?" In a dazed fashion she counted.

"Presently," said Vladimir, and flew his bride down another flight of stairs. He avoided the elephant and flung open a Prussian blue door.

"Here," he said, "the star's dressing-room."

In it was a lion. It was in a wheelable cage and it was asleep, but it was a lion.

Stroganoff gave up the struggle. He stood silent as the rest of the company crowded in and looked at the lion and looked at each other and wondered what to say.

"This . . . other company," said Natasha at last. "This company that plays the Racine and Oscar Wilde, is it by chance a circus?"

The company held its breath.

Stroganoff turned away. "Oui," he said heavily.

THE great day had come. Tonight the Ballet Stroganoff from Omsk opened in St. Petersburg. Tonight the Theatre Boris Goudonov would be packed with a critical, cosmopolitan audience. Tonight General Dumka would wear all his medals. Tonight Stroganoff would make a speech. Tonight Natasha would take her six curtains.

But at the moment it was the dress rehearsal.

What had turned out to be definitely an elephant was looking on from the vast recesses of the wings. Whatever this was, it was certainly no circus.

In fact, it was the ballet Sylvia, which had drawn all Paris—for forty years—and which Stroganoff had selected for his opening night. For, as sitting in the stalls he explained to his papoushka, it contained Sylvia, the part delicious and not too difficult for Natasha, and Cupid, which with a little rearrangement and a seasoning of solos, had been made large enough to satisfy Arenskaya—except in the billing.

"And my Katusha?" asked Aliosha suspiciously.

"She is the Goddess Diane," said Stroganoff.

Papoushka considered. "Has she got a solo?"

"You will see," said Stroganoff tactfully.

A depressed General Dumka flopped into the stall. "Little Igor," he said despairingly, "refuses to dance."

"Why you tell me this now," said Stroganoff, annoyed. "Have I not enough to despair myself with already?"

It looked as though the man who was no Nijinsky would have to be leading dancer after all.

"GOOD God," said the sandy man.

"But it was not so terrible—this," said Stroganoff. "You must understand, my friend, that there was then only one Nijinsky. He stood alone. There were many dancers who did not drop the ballerina, but only one Nijinsky. So whether it is a trusted friend from Omsk who dance bad, or some grasping newcomer who dance only a little better, who is to support my Natasha—it make small difference. I am clear—yes?"

"Completely," said the sandy man. "I can almost follow you."

"Ah, my Natasha," said Stroganoff gravely. "She was a flower in porcelain, a china butterfly. When she come on, the stage light up, whether it is Omsk, Peterburg, or Paris. My Natasha, she has a charm that none can resist, least of all," he gazed into the past, "me."

The door opened. The present came in. The little woman in black waddled across the room and kissed Stroganoff. Stroganoff pinched her cheek.

"So you are happy at last, my pigeon?" he asked. "Your little daughter has the six curtains."

"The six curtains and the empty house," the woman said. "Tonight we have the six curtains again—and to the house full."

The sandy man took in the bulging legs balanced on high heels, the over-tight black satined behind, the bulging bosom, the white face, the eyelashes stiff with mascara. He decided he could resist her quite easily.

But Stroganoff was patting her hand. "Not tonight," he was saying. "The little one does not dance tonight."

"We do the Sugar Plum here in London, us," she said. "Do not forget we do the Sugar Plum."

"I will remember," said Stroganoff.

"You will," she said, "for I will continue to remind you."

Stroganoff kissed her hand. She waddled out.

"So that was Natasha," said the sandy man.

"All gold, my Natasha," said Stroganoff fondly. "And still beautiful."

"And the little dancer with the six curtains is your daughter," said the sandy man.

"But no," said Stroganoff astounded. "Why you think that?"

OPENING night. In ten minutes the curtain would be going up on an evening of all surpassing triumph. Or would it?

At any rate, most of the costumes had come. And if the audience streaming in lacked the glow of the balletomane entering the Maryinsky, at any rate it was streaming, and, which was curious, bringing its children.

"Can it be," said General Dumka, gazing at the milling foyer, "that they have mistaken the date?"

"Impossible," said Stroganoff. "To confuse the circus with the ballet! No, this cannot happen."

He gazed at a group of children, babbling and tugging at their mother's skirt. Doubt seized him. Soon it became a certainty. The children were howling their heads off and the mother was demanding her money back.

"See," said Dumka in macabre triumph.

"Poof!" said Stroganoff.

Backstage all was frenzy. Never had there been such a last minute of frantic hammering, lost wreaths, and nervy mamoushkas commanding maddened daughters to keep calm. For that matter, never before had there been a wedged-into-a-corner elephant.

"Ten minutes," sang the call-boy.

"Mr. Stroganoff!" A strung-up mamoushka planted herself firmly in his path. "In Omsk you promised . . ."

"Later," said Stroganoff. "Tomorrow."

He hurried on. Dancers plucked at his sleeve, electricians held out appealing hands. But Stroganoff forged purposefully ahead. He was the father of his family and he must bless his children. First the little wife.

"My six curtains?" said Natasha, a porcelain angel in all save voice. . . .

The conductor rapped his baton. Silence fell on the house. In the background an elephant trumpeted.

The footlights came up. In the dark sea of the auditorium noble bosoms rose a little and military backs stiffened. The conductor raised his baton. Delibes' beguiling music welled up.

The Company Stroganoff had opened in the Capital.

"THE orchestra could be worse," said P. Puthyk, always eager to be pleased.

"I deny this," said Stravinsky.

The curtain became a glade. The glade became infested with nymphs, fauns, and villagers. The statue of love became Arenskaya. The simple story leapt, rotated and pattered on its way.

"Who is that?" asked Diaghilev as a Dresden china Sylvia sported by the brook.

"It is Natasha Stroganova," said Nouvel.

"She could be better," said Fokine critically.

"But she could be worse." Diaghilev made a note.

Presently it was the first interval. Then Act II.

The simple story was growing more complicated every moment. In his stage box Aliosha was heaving.

"Where," he demanded indignantly as his son's bald dome came bobbing in, "where is my Katusha?"

"She is waiting to take the house by storm in her temple," said Stroganoff comfortably.

Aliosha glowered at him. "It is not right that you tuck my Katusha in a temple where she is not seen till," he consulted his programme, "scene eleven."

"Nine," said Stroganoff.

"Tell me," Aliosha became the businessman, "how much money you lose this evening?"

"Papoushka," Stroganoff looked hurt. "Be reasonable. Tonight is my triumph. I have invite all the capital and they have come and they enjoy themselves." He waited hopefully for the roar of applause that should have followed the solo of the man who was no Nijinsky.

One or two people did clap.

"But how much you lose?" repeated Aliosha.

Stroganoff sighed. "It is not what we lose tonight that matter. It is how much we have left for tomorrow."

"Very well. How much have we left for tomorrow?"

"Nothing. But it is not this that worry me. It is the money for the next production. I must have the finance."

"Nu?" said the papoushka unmoved.

"You must help me," said Stroganoff. "Tomorrow my little father will write to my little grandfather and ask him for fifty thousand roubles, or better, sixty."

"The little grandfather," said Aliosha severely, "will give you no more—may he live long in this world to bless us."

"May he live long," agreed Stroganoff dully.

"Sssh!" Aliosha pointed to the stage. . . .

Act III. The simple rural story had got too complicated to follow. Arenskaya had elbowed in a solo. At last Katusha was in her temple and Aliosha was leaning forward in his box and wondering if she was going to be allowed to step out of it.

But Vladimir Stroganoff was deep in conversation in the bar. He was talking to the comfortably stomached stranger he had met in the Trans-Siberian Express.

". . . This little Baskova in Vladivostok," said the stranger, "is—how to put it—my discovery."

"Understood," said Stroganoff.

"It is not right," said the stranger, "that she should bury her talent in there."

"Of course not," said Stroganoff, temples in which to tuck her already floating in his mind.

"But here in the capital it is not easy to arrange for the début of a ballerina."

"It is not easy," Stroganoff agreed.

"But it must be arranged," said the stranger. "For if the little Baskova comes to the capital and I have nothing for her, she—how to put it—will have nothing for me."

"It is not impossible to arrange, but it is . . . expensive."

The stranger fiddled with his watch-chain. "I am not a rich man," he said.

"Me too, I am now poor," said Stroganoff.

They looked at one another. Each understood the other perfectly.

THE ballet had come to an end. The artists were lined up to take their curtain.

The first curtain came down slowly and gave them plenty of time to bow radiantly to the house and politely to one another. And the house, if it did not rise at them, at least applauded politely. After all, the capital had seen worse companies than this—in the provinces.

The second curtain went to the soloists. The applause was a little warmer—more personal.

The third curtain belonged to the delicious Natasha, to Arenskaya, and to the man who was no Nijinsky. The audience still applauded.

The fourth curtain went to Natasha alone. They brought on her bouquets.

The fifth curtain showed Natasha in front of her company. The applause still survived, but there wasn't much to spare.

On the stage, behind the about-to-part curtains, Natasha, flushed and palpitating, listened acutely to what was left of the applause.

"Six curtains for Natasha," she breathed.

In the wings the mamoushka crossed herself.

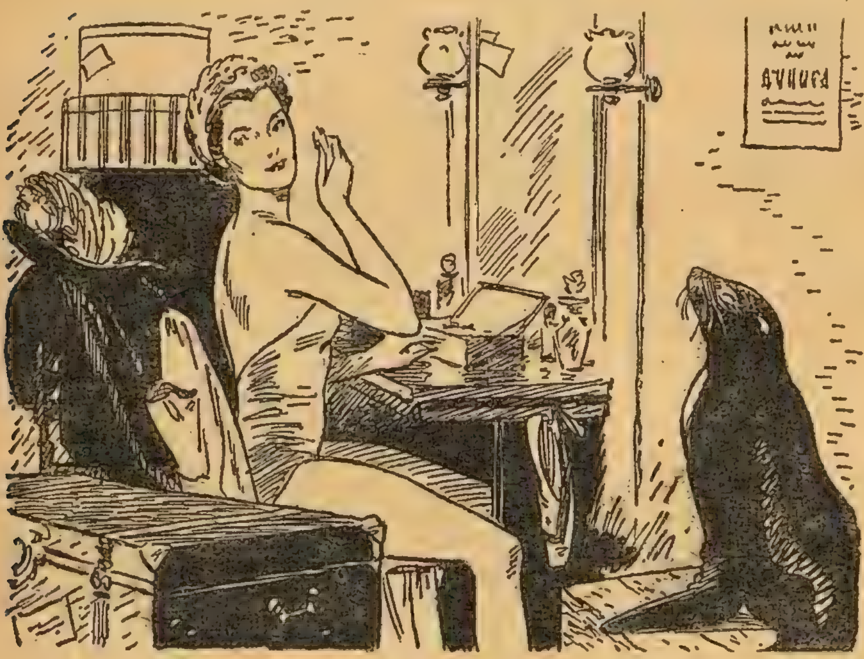
The stage director gave the signal, Natasha switched on her stage radiance and moved towards the narrow lane that would bring her out in front of the tabs.

"Six curtains," she breathed, and, stumbling over Arenskaya's outstretched foot, measured her length on the stage. . . .

"But, my darling," Arenskaya explained later, "I am desolated. But what could I do? There were you on the floor, your face all dirty from the dust, your costume—mh, mh, mh! And there was the audience waiting. It break my heart, but what could I do? I had to save the day. I had to take your curtain for you."

"You showed great presence of mind, darling," said Natasha. They kissed.

The worried-to-death Stroganoff, hurrying into his wife's dressing-room, blinked. "You are the friends?" he asked, amazed.



"But the friends bosom," said Arenskaya. She blew the purpling mamoushka a kiss and withdrew.

Stroganoff opened his arms. "My darling."

"Your darling—poof!" said Natasha. "You sack that woman tomorrow or I never speak to you again."

"Tonight," said the mamoushka.

"My six curtains," said Natasha. "My six curtains of which I have dreamt, eaten, and slept, my six curtains in the capital—ruined! And it is all your fault for bringing that wicked woman to the company."

"My darling infant," said Stroganoff patiently. "Be reasonable. Is it her fault that you fall down?"

"Yes," screamed Natasha. "She stick out her foot as I go forward." She fell upon Stroganoff and pummelled his dress shirt. "Do you hear? She trip me up."

Stroganoff seized the fighting little hands and summoned all his tact. "She will be put in her place, that one," he promised. "Tonight I have arranged for a new ballerina to come to the company."

Natasha stopped wrestling. "A new ballerina?"

"The ballerina beauteous from Vladivostok." Stroganoff waited for the chorus of congratulations.

"Villain!" said Natasha. "Monster!" She snatched up her fur coat and strode into the corridor.

The mamoushka ran out after her. "Natasha," she wailed. "Come back. You are but in your corset."

IT was 2:15 at a little restaurant near the theatre. Natasha was looking thoughtful. She had to tell her husband something and he wasn't going to like it. The husband was thoughtful, too. He had to tell his wife something and she was going to loathe it.

"The bortsch is cold," said Natasha to pass the time. How to tell him that she had been offered a European tour—with Diaghilev?

"But the champagne is warm," said Stroganoff postponing the inevitable. How to tell her he'd been offered a new ballet with the little Baskova dancing the lead?

The proprietor wandered up. "Everything as you like it?" he enquired.

"Delicious," they assured him vaguely.

Relieved, the proprietor wandered away.

"Vladimir," said Natasha, pushing aside her untouched plate. "What is the dearest thing in the world to you?"

This was easy. "But you, my darling. All day, all night, I plan for you. Everything I do is for your happiness. I promise you that I will make you the greatest ballerina in the world only . . . only not all at once."

"Vladimir, I have been given a great opportunity."

"But not all at once," repeated Stroganoff, who had not been listening. "Sometimes it is the policy to draw back a little from the public so that they clamour for you all the more. To give the limelight to some lesser dancer so that when you return they realize what they have been missing."

"He said I had chic," said Natasha, who had not been listening.

"So I have found the backer with much money with the protégée with not too-much talent. And the little Baskova signs her contract tomorrow."

It was out. Or part of it. And Natasha, who had caught the word "Contract," was now all attention.

"Who sign what?" she asked sharply.

"But the little Baskova. I sign her for the new ballet, Boadicea, and," he gulped, "she dance the lead."

It was out. All of it.

"So," said Natasha. The mouth tightened. "So. The little Baskova is to dance the lead while I . . ." Suddenly she remembered. "Never mind, my darling," she said, with such a sweetness that Stroganoff almost reeled. "No doubt she will do well enough."

"You are not cross?" said Stroganoff dazed.

"But why, my darling? I know that you study only my interests, and if you think that it is right that the little Baskova dance the lead then it must be so."

"But it is an angel," burst out Stroganoff. In his relief he drank her champagne.

"Then all is well," said Natasha. "You put on Boadicea with the little Baskova. You have the success. And when I am back from Europe I lead the company again."

"Yes, yes," said Stroganoff. "What?"

"Europe, my darling. I see Diaghilev this morning. He makes me the offer to go to Europe. I accept."

Stroganoff leapt to his feet. "I kill him," he announced. He looked round for an implement and found a fish-knife. Brandishing it wildly, he rushed out.

Natasha burst into tears and stumbled out of the restaurant.

They will be back to-morrow, thought the proprietor philosophically. He put away the bill.

"MY darling," said the mamoushka, "let us be reasonable. Six curtains are important. But Paris, Paris is more important."

"Diaghilev promised them to me," said Natasha mutinously. "And now he has not put it in the contract. It is no use, mamoushka, I cannot trust him."

They were sitting in mamoushka's bedroom. For, naturally, at this crisis in her life, Natasha had gone back to mother, leaving her husband in another bedroom in the same hotel, frantic and definitely alone.

"My darling," said mamoushka. "Let us quietly consider what is the worst that can happen if you sign this contract. We open in Paris and you do not have your six curtains. Alas! But you have had the success enormous—this is inevitable."

The house 'phone burbled. Natasha crossed to the wall, unhooked the receiver and squeezed.

"My darling," said Stroganoff in an adenoidal croak. "Come back to me, I beseech. Without you I cannot sleep."

"Useless to entreat," said Natasha coldly. "I have left you for ever." She stopped squeezing and hung up.

"It is not only the six curtains," she told mamoushka. "But what does Diaghilev offer me in the contract? In Giselle I am a Wili. In Swan Lake I dance the Queen only if Karsavina and Lopokova are ill and Spessitzeva and Kshessinskaya cannot be there in time."

"You have a solo," said mamoushka.

"One solo! No, no, I stay where I am."

The house telephone exploded.

"But this is impossible," said the mamoushka as she advanced.

"My darling," groaned Stroganoff. "I cannot sleep."

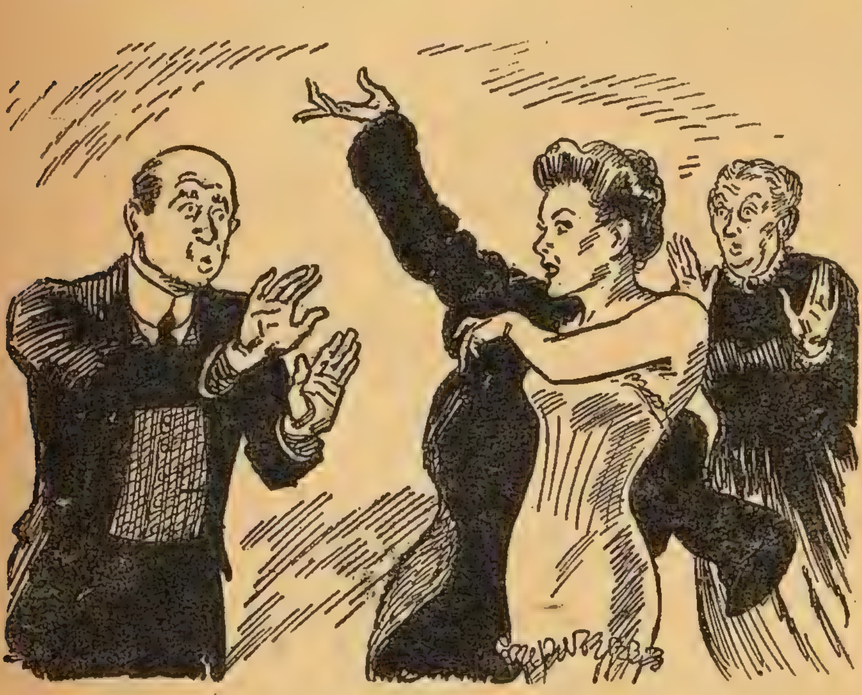
"Me neither," snapped the mamoushka. She stopped squeezing, then turned to Natasha. "The hour is late and I am fatigued. Your career I will discuss, but this nonsense . . . " She waved it way. "To bed."

They settled in side by side.

"The morning brings its own counsel," said mamoushka, "so let us leave our project in God's good hands till then."

"In God's good hands," agreed Natasha. "All the same, if Vladimir had any sense he would come and fetch me."

There was a timid knock at the door. The door edged open. A bald dome peered round. "Ah, my two little pigeons! In bed already!" Stroganoff beamed.



"What a pretty picture you make." He took a tentative step forward, making a pretty good picture himself in a plum-colored dressing-gown on inside out and only one bedroom slipper. He looked anxiously at Natasha's face for the trace of a welcoming smile. It didn't seem to be there. He took another step.

"Charming," he said. "The little daughter who would fly away before the wings are set," he crept forward, "and the little mother who understands where her real future lies." He sat down on the edge of the bed.

"Go away," said Natasha. "I have left you for ever. Go away! Go away!" She threw a pillow at him and burst into tears.

"There," said the mamoushka well pleased. "See what you have done."

Stroganoff clutched the pillow. He looked at mamoushka's night-capped head. If he felt an impulse he restrained it. "Nu," he said. "I am the clumsy businessman. The wicked ogre. The hard-hearted husband—isn't it?"

"You, you, you," sobbed Natasha. She flung her arms round him.

Stroganoff clutched. "See what I have done," he said triumphantly. "There, there, there."

Mamoushka sniffed. "You are standing in the way of my daughter's career," she said.

"I can give her all Diaghilev can and more," proclaimed Stroganoff aroused. "I will take her to Paris. To London. And she shall not have the small solo and the understudy. She shall have . . . "

"Six curtains," sobbed Natasha.

"Surely. It will be in the contract."

Natasha dried her eyes. "When we go?"

"But at once," said Stroganoff. "Only first we must finish the season and then we are rich."

Mamoushka sniffed.

"But yes. Did you not count the house tonight? We lose only five hundred roubles—almost the profit."

"My little husband," said Natasha. She climbed out of bed. She remembered something. "The little Baskova," she said, and climbed back again.

"The little Baskova?" The mamoushka clutched at the new straw. "Who is she?"

"She is from Vladivostok," said Natasha. "Vladimir has rashly promised her the new ballet, but now," she looked all ready to get out of bed again, "he has changed his mind." She smiled winningly.

"The little Baskova," said Stroganoff, "brings the backing. She rehearses Boadicea tomorrow. It does not follow, my little calf and my little," he looked at the mamoushka, "cow, that she will dance it. It is a long way between the first rehearsal and the opening night, and many things can happen."

"You will sack her," ordered mamoushka.

"Trust me," said Stroganoff. "All will be well."

Natasha considered. "And anyway," she mused, "Arenskaya will be livid."

"Go to bed—both of you," snapped the mamoushka. She knew when she had lost a battle.

"PICTURE to yourself my embarrassment," Stroganoff told the sandy man. "On the one hand," he waved it, "I have the new ballet and the money. On the other," he waved that, "there is the little Baskova. It was not that I expected her to be the sensation, but she . . . was . . . a . . . ?"

"Little Baskova," supplied the sandy man helpfully.

"She is pretty enough. She has the sex appeal. When she stand still it is not too bad. But when she dance—aie!" He threw up his hands. "It is clear at once that it is impossible she is a soloist in the capital.

"What to do?" Stroganoff went on. "I let her dance and my prestige it is the ruin. I give her sack and my bank balance it is the bust. I puzzle, I think, I argue, I tear my hair, and I am at the end of my wits. Until one day I am lunching with Arenskaya at the little restaurant . . . we are both a little distrait. . . ."

"MY bill," called Diaghilev.

The proprietor brought it himself. He waited hopefully. But Diaghilev only sighed.

Stroganoff watched the hated cortège traverse to the door. "The next time I see that villain face to face I tell him something," he assured Arenskaya.

But Arenskaya had not heard. Her eyes were on the cortège: Stravinsky, Benois, Nouvel, Bolm, Nijinsky, Fokine, Bakst, with P. Puthyk prancing importantly in the rear.

"Aie me," said Arenskaya, "I fear I shall marry with that one."

"Puthyk is your lover?" asked Stroganoff.

"As yet he scarcely knows that I exist," said Arenskaya. "But he will marry me all the same."

"A marriage between artists. M'h. M'h. M'h."

"I know. If I were wise I would marry a Grand Duke."

"Or at least a banker," said Stroganoff toying with the idea of Abram of Omsk.

"Puthyk cannot help me in my career," said Arenskaya. "He is but the assistant to the assistant of the big Sergei Grigorieff."

"Then why marry him?" asked Stroganoff.

"I love him." Arenskaya dabbed her eyes. "But enough of my troubles. Let us talk about yours."

"Me," said Stroganoff, "but I have no troubles at all. I have the new ballet—the money—what could trouble me?" He laughed. It didn't sound so good.

"The little Baskova," said Arenskaya, and Stroganoff was at once plunged into gloom.

"So you notice it too," he despaired.

"Am I not in class? Do I not watch rehearsals? Is it not evident to the whole world that she would not be there but for her chocolate papoushka?"

"Ah, so," said Stroganoff sadly.

"Vladimir," said Arenskaya earnestly, "it is not because I want the rôle myself—though it would suit me well—that I tell you the little Baskova must not dance. Let Natasha have it."

"My little pigeon is not as reasonable as usual at the moment. Every day she gets the sweetmeats from Diaghilev and every night she makes me the scene. And there is nothing I can do—nothing! No Baskova, no ballet. I tell you, my darling, I have not slept for three nights now." He pointed to the circles under his eyes.

Arenskaya was all sympathy. "There I can help you," she said. She took out a golden phial from her bag and passed it across. "My sleeping draught."

"It will put me to sleep?" asked Stroganoff.

"One little drop in a glass of milk, and you are asleep immediate for twelve hours."

"Good," said Stroganoff dutifully. He tucked the phial in his pocket.

THAT afternoon Aliosha Stroganoff decided to take a hand. He had lunched with his son and Vladimir had not touched his roast goose. And when the Stroganoffs refused roast goose, or any other form of food, things were serious. So he made his way to the wardrobe where the mamoushka was ironing Natasha's tu-tu.

"Old woman," he said, "your daughter is giving my son no peace. He is worn to a shadow. There are rings under his eyes and he does not eat his roast goose. It was not for this that I bring him to Petersburg."

"And it is not for others to dance the lead that I bring my Natasha." The mamoushka shook out the tu-tu.

"Woman, you are a fool," said Aliosha. "Where the money is—there goes the rôle. It is a law of nature."

"Why is it not your money, old skin-the-flint?" The mamoushka turned on him. "You grudge to ruin yourself for your only son. You should be ashamed." She stamped her foot. "Baskova must go."

"Baskova stays," thundered Aliosha. "It is signed, agreed and paid for. It can gain you nothing that my son should lead the life of a dog with a cat. You have but to speak the word to your daughter and she will be as sweet as the sugar on the Easter cake."

"I will speak the word to her. I will speak the word that will turn her into a wild cat. I will tell her she is too soft with your Vladimir, I will tell her to take his money, to drive him into his grave. I will tell her to go to Diaghilev."

Aliosha got up. "Woman," he thundered. "I have heard enough. I will send for my little father. He will know how to deal with you."

"And I," said the mamoushka unexpectedly, "will send for my old mamoushka."

They shook fists at each other.

THE still of the night. Inside the darkened bedroom of the Stroganoffs all was quiet.

But not for long.

"My darling," said Vladimir, "I am not happy."

The humped back of Natasha hardly moved. Very tentatively Stroganoff put an arm around it. This time the movement was definite—away from him.

"So," said Stroganoff. He turned himself to the other side and addressed the wall. "So. I bring her to Petersburg, I am polite to the mamoushka. And what come of this? The back!"

"The best years of my life," said Natasha to the other wall. "All my charm. All my talent that other managements beg me for. And what do I get? Not even the sleep in peace."

"Sleep! I have not closed the eye for three nights."

"It is the lie," said Natasha turning violently. "All last night you snored. Now be silent and let me sleep." She jerked herself away so violently that she nearly fell out of bed.

"Is it my fault that the Baskova will not do the walk out?" demanded Stroganoff. "Have we not all done our best to insult her?"

"The insult to that one is no use. If she will not give up the rôle you must take it from her."

"But then the backer take away the money! Have I not told you this a million times!"

"So do not tell me again," said Natasha.

Stroganoff closed his eyes. The image of the little Baskova floated—well, not exactly floated—before him. He opened them quickly.

The sleeping draught! He would take it and sleep like a log and snore like a wild boar and Natasha could shake him till she was tired and he would not hear her. Maybe she'd be sorry then!

The sleeping draught was in his waistcoat pocket. It meant getting out of bed. But it was worth it. One little drop, Arenskaya had said. He would take two. Three. He would fall asleep at once and remain insensible for twelve hours. Lost to the world. No backer. No Baskova. No business. No performance. . . . Goodness!

Inspiration hit Stroganoff. He sat up in bed. He thought it over. He couldn't see a flaw anywhere. Foolproof! He thumped his wife's back.

"Mama," screamed Natasha, "now he assaults me."

"I embrace you, my darling. Our troubles are over. The little Baskova does not dance." He hugged her.

"But what is this?" said Natasha. "What good news can have come to you in the middle of the night?"

"It comes from the head," said Stroganoff. "So, my darling, it is necessary that from now on you attend rehearsals as the understudy."

"Me, understudy!" said Natasha. "Never!"

"It must be made to appear so," explained Stroganoff. "But you and I will know that at the first performance it is you who will be dancing."

"And the little Baskova?"

"She must suspect nothing. It will be a pact between you and me. You must not even tell your mamoushka."

Natasha thought it over. "Vladimir, I have in you the confidence complete. But if anything goes wrong . . ."

He kissed her. "Then I give you to Diaghilev."

Natasha relaxed. "You are the dearest husband in the world," she said for the first time since the Stroganoff company had opened in the capital.

Stroganoff thought happily of his sleeping draught. No need to get out of bed to get it now.

IT was 9:00 P.M. The new ballet, Boadicea, was preceded by a divertissement from Cassa-Noisette. Natasha danced the Sugar Plum. She danced it beautifully.

Backstage, Stroganoff kicked open the door to the star's dressing-room, a tray of glasses in one hand and a bucket in the other. In the bucket surrounded by ice reposed a bottle of champagne.

"A toast to your performance," he said to the little Baskova. He arranged the glasses on the table.

"See," said her backer, "Vladimir loves you."

With the air of a celestial maître d'hôtel about to offer the moon, Stroganoff poured out the slightly flat champagne and passed it to the little Baskova.

"Before the performance?" she asked dubiously.

"One little glass," said the maître d'hôtel. "Poof—you will dance all the better for it."

"And me?" said the backer thirstily.

"Certainly," said Stroganoff delighted. He poured.

"And you?" said the backer.

Stroganoff nearly dropped the bottle. "Me—no. I must keep the head cool for my speech."

"Nonsense," said the backer. "Drink, we insist."

"But it very important, my speech," said Stroganoff. "Full of the words difficult." He groped for them. "British Constitution," he produced unexpectedly.

"Drink," urged the little Baskova. "I shan't touch a drop until you do."

Stroganoff gazed at her with hurt reproach. "But it is to pay you the compliment that I carry the heavy bucket up all those stairs. Come, my little one, drink to give me pleasure."

"Not until you do," said the dancer mutinously.

"My darling!" Stroganoff invented wildly. "I would love to drink with you. But I have—I have—the gout terrible," he began to limp, "and my doctor . . ."

"Well, anyway, I'm going to drink," declared the backer. He tossed off his glass.

"If you don't drink," said the little Baskova with a distinct edge in her voice, "I do not go on."

A gleam of hope lit Stroganoff's face only to flicker out again as a thin spatter of applause came floating through the corridor to act as a spur to the little Baskova's ambition. "Heavens—my make-up!" she said, and fled to her dressing-table.

The backer stretched himself. "Aie!" he said, "but I am sleepy." He poured himself a second glass. He poured out for Stroganoff. "Drink," he invited.

Impossible to delay any longer. Stroganoff clutched his glass, clinking with the little Baskova's, raised it and waited. He realized that she was waiting for him. No escape! The things I do for my Natasha, he thought.

"God bless us all," he said manfully and drank.

"Amen to that," said the backer. He could hardly keep his eyes open.

"God bless you both," said the little Baskova. She gulped joyously.

The door opened. In it stood Natasha.

"Ah—the little wife," said the backer. "Come drink to our success. He lurched towards the bottle.

"Non!" cried Stroganoff. "Non!" He swayed.

"Drink to my success." The little Baskova yawned.

Resolution came to Natasha. "Yes, I will drink. I will drink to," she raised her glass, "Diaghilev."

"Non!" cried Stroganoff. "Non! Non! British Conshtishonshon."

"To Diaghilev," toasted Natasha. She drank.

Five minutes later Arenskaya peeped in.

Well, well, well, she thought. She set about taking off the sleeping Baskova's costume.

"AND so," Stroganoff told the sandy man, "you will understand, my friend, that for the next few nights I sleep alone."

The sandy man nodded.

"Only," said Stroganoff, "I do not sleep."

"What about the sleeping draught?"

"No more of that," said Stroganoff. "The headache with which I awake in the little Baskova's dressing-room. Aie! I can think of nothing; my plan exploded—what has become of my first night? My Natasha—what she will do to our marriage? Or what the mamoushka who has awaken us is saying? All that I think of is the aspirin. And as for the others, they, too, think only of their head. But later, when they are recovered, it is different."

"I can imagine it," said the sandy man.

"You cannot imagine it," said Stroganoff firmly. "It takes a Russian impresario with the plan exploded to imagine it. But, in short, my friend, at once everything is the kaput."

THUNDER in the air.

All day long the company had been listless. The girls passed the time darning their ballet shoes and trying not to spend money for they had been on half wages for weeks. Natasha and Arenskaya went driving in the Park. But not together. The little Baskova and the backer had gone.

Stroganoff had spent the day doing his accounts, but even that optimistic adder-up could not tot them into profit. The only surplus was vegetables. St. Petersburg had taken to dropping into the upper reaches of the theatre (25 kopecs) and throwing them at Boadicea.

"But we lose less money this week than last," said Stroganoff, closing the ledger with a defiant bang.

Now it was evening and the company was projecting listless Swans on a lackadaisical lake to a half-filled house. In the wings a flowing moustache was expressing its views to to a bald-headed dome. The circus proprietor had tracked down Stroganoff.

"Let us talk frankly," he was saying. "Your ballet is not stimulating my business. In fact, it is doing me harm. Before you came I was playing every night to capacity—well, almost. And now my houses are but little better than yours."

Stroganoff drew himself up. "Is this my fault?"

"My friend," said the proprietor, "there is one public for the circus and one for the ballet, and sooner than confuse themselves they both stay away. No, no, my friend, one of us must go."

Stroganoff brightened. "When you leave?"

Aliosha came wandering up, a sheaf of bills in his hands. "Vladimir," he announced. "I have decided. On Sunday I go back to Omsk."

"I shall miss you," said Stroganoff, relieved.

"You will not miss me. You will be with me."

"But, papoushka! My career! My Natasha's career. Your Katusha's career," he appealed desperately.

"It is no use," said Aliosha. "I and the little father have given you your wish. But if we continue we will soon begin to lose our own money."

"Meanwhile you lose mine," said the circus proprietor. He wandered over and patted the elephant.

"We are losing money, it is true," argued Stroganoff. "But each week we lose less and less."

"Anyone can lose money," said Aliosha, a chip off the old block, "but it takes a wise man to know when to stop. My son—you are not a success in the capital. Give in and come home."

"Little father, all that I need now is the little coup. One success and Petersburg is at my feet. If I could get a Pavlova. Just one Pavlova."

Aliosha was silent.

"Papoushka," pleaded Stroganoff, "write to the little grandfather."

Aliosha fumbled inside his pockets. It is not necessary. He will be here tomorrow." He pulled out a wire and passed it to his son. It read:

Decided to look into things myself. Arriving by train tomorrow. Father.

WITH the Trans-Siberian Express about to arrive two days late and the Vienna Express about to arrive four hours late, the platform was crowded. Stroganoff threaded General Dumka to a point of vantage.

"From here," he said, "we will see the little grandfather leaning out of the window and greet him before he can greet us."

"The old one will be too tired to look out of the window," dampened Dumka.

"We Stroganoffs do not tire easily," boasted Vladimir. "And when the little grandfather sees what I have brought him," he held up a box of chocolates and, as an afterthought, helped himself, "and hears that he will ride to the hotel in a snow-white landau with the rubber wheels, the years will drop from him and also his money."

A train chugged triumphantly in.

"The Vienna Express," said Dumka.

"Why you worry me with Vienna?" said Stroganoff. He stared down the platform into the empty distance.

But Dumka was looking at a cluster of bouquets gathered in front of a carriage held out in worship to a small dark woman who was descending from it.

"Heavens!" he cried. "It is the divine Dourakova."

"Dourakova! But she is in Vienna."

"She has come back," breathed Dumka, gazing in worship at a mass of luggage that was piling up and rapidly hiding the ballerina.

A signal fell, but Stroganoff failed to notice. He, too, was gazing at what could still be seen of the sables that dripped from the divine Dourakova. And then he was galvanized.

"My friend," he cried, "We are mad. For what we wait? Come!" He dashed down the platform.

"Marya!" screamed Dourakova to her maid. "Count the luggage again." But not trusting her, she herself counted. "Only thirty-four pieces. This cannot be right."

Stroganoff caught the recapitulating hand and kissed a diamond ring. "Madame, this is a great day for me."

A gaunt figure alighted from the carriage. "I have a headache," it announced starkly.

"Oh, mercy!" said Dourakova aghast. "My poor Grisha. Do something!" she implored Stroganoff.

Stroganoff extended the chocolates. The gaunt figure munched. "Soft centre," it said, disgusted. It spat.

"Say nothing," hissed Dumka to the about-to-bridle Stroganoff. "It is Grisha Podushkin."

"I do not care if it is Rasputin. He spit."

"But he is the leader of the claque," Dumka urged. "He organizes everything."

"He does not organize this," said Stroganoff. He bowed deeply to Dourakova.

"Madame," he said, "my carriage awaits you. You get in it quick before Diaghilev he pop up. It has rubber wheels." He swept the ballerina off the platform.

From a window of the Trans-Siberian Express a beady-eyed old man from Omsk glared after him.

GENERAL DUMKA stood in front of the mirror in the hotel and twiddled his carnation.

"What is the time?" he asked.

"Time you went," said Vladimir Stroganoff. He kissed him on both cheeks. "And remember our destiny lies in your hands."

"Go with God," said Aliosha.

"Or we all go back to Omsk," said the little grandfather. He dug his chin in the air.

Vladimir crossed to him. "Little grandfather, why are you still angry? Have I not explained to you many times why I do not stay to meet you at the station? Why then do you still scowl?"

"And why should I not scowl?" demanded Moysha. "Did not the droshky try to overcharge me?"

"Little grandfather," pleaded Vladimir. "Give Dumka your blessing. It needs only for him to bring Dourakova to us and all our troubles will be over."

"That's right," said Aliosha encouragingly.

"Dumka," said Vladimir, patting the General on the shoulder, "be of good courage and do not forget to tell Dourakova that here she will be the Assoluta of Assolutas."

Natasha came in.

"I go now," said Dumka. He ran.

"Who?" asked Natasha ominously. "Who is to be the Assoluta of Assolutas?"

"My child!" The tactful Aliosha wrapped his arms around her. "I have for you the surprise. Guess whom we invite to join our company."

"Guess, my darling," Vladimir hovered anxiously.

"The divine Dourakova," said Moysha. He had tired of the build-up.

"So," Natasha wrenched herself out of Aliosha's arms.

"I see you are pleased," said Aliosha gazing at the stony face.

"Say you are pleased, my darling," pleaded Vladimir.

"Pleased!" said Natasha. "Pleased—when the Stroganoffs conspire behind my back—all three of them—to bring to my company a ballerina that shall rob me of my rôles." She glared. "If she comes, I go."

"It is that or Omsk," thundered Aliosha.

"Not for me. For me—Europe. For me—Diaghilev."

"My darling," said Vladimir. "See the reason. With Dourakova we can continue in the capital. Without her we go back to Omsk. Help me, my little wife."

But Natasha did not soften. "I must think of my career." She tapped her toe. "If she comes, I go."

Vladimir saw the heaving stomach of his father, he saw the shocked expression of his little grandfather. He drew comfort from the clan.

"If she comes," he said, "you may go."

Natasha looked at him dazed.

AT a table in the Cubat restaurant the gay chatter that had started the meal fizzled out.

"It had been a great success Vienna?" said Dumka.

"A great success," said Dourakova thoughtfully.

"The affairs of the heart, they were amusing—yes?"

Dourakova considered. "Amusing—no. But they were sensible. I have married Grisha."

"Grisha!" said General Dumka surprised.

"Grisha is a genius," said Dourakova. "Never has my applause been so well organized. I tell you, there has never been a leader of the claque like my Grisha. When I marry him and bring him here, Chaliapin is in tears and Caruso comes to plead personally with me."

"A prudent marriage. My congratulations."

"Prudent!" said Dourakova. "It is sheer genius. Listen to me, my Dumka. There are some ballerinas who marry their impresarios, there are others who marry their conductors—both of these are good for the career. There are the ballerinas that marry the business men, but soon they cease to be ballerinas. There are the silly ones that marry other dancers, but these we need not discuss. But me, I am the first ballerina who has married her cheer-leader, and now am certain of what is the most important thing in a ballerina's life—her applause."

"And now," Dumka said, "when shall you dance next?"

"It is not when, it is where." She drooped a little.

"You have no definite plans?" asked Dumka hopefully.

"Oh, yes, I have plans. Odessa, Sevastopol, Kharkov. And," she said with mounting venom, "Omsk."

"The provincial tour!" said Dumka aghast.

"Yes, my darling," said Dourakova sadly.

"Doura!" Dumka leant forward. "There is no need for you to go to the provinces. I, too, have had the success. I am now artistic adviser to the Ballet Stroganoff."

Dourakova wrinkled her brow. Stroganoff! "But it is the awful man from Omsk who will not go away all afternoon," she remembered.

"He is a great man," said Dumka reverently.

Dourakova laughed merrily. "Oh, my Dumka, always you make jokes. Me—join a company from Omsk!"

"It is better than dancing there. My darling, we have been very frank with each other. Let it continue so. You are in the puree. We are in the bortsch. Come to us, and we will all be in the caviar. Come and see our company. Afterwards you shall decide." He glanced at his wrist-watch. "We are still in time for the last ballet. Let us hope that it is not Boadicea. . . ."

It was not Boadicea.

As Dourakova and General Dumka took their places in the box, trumpets blared and four elephants stood on their hind-legs and waved their front ones. The ballerina took her bow. She was a performing seal.

"Dear God," said Dourakova, "are we at the circus?"

"Oui," said Dumka heavily.

THE Wild Strawberry, Dancing and Singing, was one of several dozen similar establishments in the capital but happened to be the best in the neighbourhood. Dumka turned into it thankfully. A little drink would hearten him to break his sad news to the Stroganoffs.

The Wild Strawberry was full of revellers. In the left-hand corner a bald dome was waving its arms.

"I cannot live without champagne," it affirmed.

General Dumka threaded his way through the smoke and the music. "Vladimir, why are you singing?"

"Dumka!" Stroganoff embraced him. "My dear Dumka, Come—sing with us. Two Guitars," he commanded his neighbours.

"Two Guitars," agreed Grisha. He began it.

Dumka chafed impatiently while the Leader of the Claque organized the room through three choruses. "Vladimir!" He seized on the lull. "I bring bad news."

"Tonight no news is bad," said Stroganoff.

"Vladimir—listen. Dourakova will not come to us."

"Is that all!" Stroganoff thumped Dumka on the back. "My friend, you distress yourself for nothing. She has no choice. Tonight," he pointed to the crescendoing Grisha, "I have signed up her cheer-leader."

"AND that," Stroganoff told the sandy man, "was the beginning of the turning-tide. From this moment things begin to change for me."

"About time," said the sandy man.

"For," said Stroganoff, "after the argument marital with the leader of the claque, the seventeen aspirins, and the little weep on Dumka's shoulder, Dourakova sign with the Ballet Stroganoff and I am the coming man.

"And so I announce the programme for the new opening. And at once all the seats are booked and I am in the roubles. The presence of Dourakova acted as a spur to my loyal little company. For her they could achieve what before they had never dared to attempt. . . ."

THE opening night. The Boris Goudonov was one vast flutter of programmes. The audience rocked on its feet, glittering, glowing, and acclaiming.

"Dourakova! Dourakova! Dourakova!"

A great ballerina was restored to her own. Grisha had done his job well.

Above her flowers Dourakova bowed, smiled, and blinked back her tears. The house would not let her go.

"Dourakova! Dourakova! Dourakova!"

In the wings Natasha and her mamoushka listened.

"Six curtains," said Natasha. "Six curtains."

". . . Seven," said the mamoushka.

". . . And eight," said Natasha, ". . . and nine."

". . . And ten," said the mamoushka.

"I can't bear it," sobbed Natasha.

Stroganoff followed Natasha to her dressing-room. Flushed with success, it was with some difficulty that he prevented himself from embracing his estranged wife. And such wonderful news he had to give her!

"Vladimir," said Natasha tearfully, "I have something to tell you." She passed him a letter. "It is from Diaghilev. He has enclosed my fare to Paris."

"So," said Stroganoff. He put on his spectacles.

"It is not that I want to leave you, Vladimir," said Natasha embarrassed. "But my career . . . With you, instead of going forward it is going back."

Stroganoff put away his spectacles. "Little idiot," he said, "is it 'going back' to dance at Tzarskoe Selo before the Tzar?"

"Tzarskoe Selo!" Natasha was confused.

"Oui," said Stroganoff. "The Ballet Stroganoff has been invited to dance for the Tzar!"

The colour came into Natasha's cheeks. "But this is wonderful. Vladimir . . . I congratulate you. It is a great thing for the Ballet Stroganoff. But what difference can it make to me? It is Dourakova who will dance before the Tzar. Natasha, she will support Dourakova."

"Of course," said a brisk voice from the doorway.

Dourakova came in. She put an arm around Natasha. "And very prettily she will support her, too," she said.

"Mademoiselle Natasha is leaving the company to join Diaghilev," said Stroganoff in an icy voice.

"What nonsense is this?" said Dourakova. "Listen, my child. You have been loyal to the company through the bad times—stay now and enjoy the good."

"Good!" said Natasha. "For whom?"

"But for all of us. For me, for you, and for our dear Vladimir, who kills himself for love of you."

Stroganoff tried to look like an impresario. But he only looked like a husband.

"For all of us," he echoed.

"For you, Vladimir, yes," said Natasha. "For Dourakova certainly. But Natasha," her lips were thin, "Natasha will not even get her six curtains."

"Curtains?" said Dourakova.

"My life is a nightmare for her six curtains," exploded Stroganoff. "They break my marriage and they spoil my company—her six curtains. She will not be happy until she has her six curtains and at Tzarskoe Selo she sees no hope, so she goes to Diaghilev. Good," he said exhausted. "I have wept too much already."

But Dourakova only smiled. "Then she shall have her six curtains. Why not?" She patted Natasha's shoulder.

Natasha seemed unable to believe her ears. "Six curtains at Tzarskoe Selo! You are not teasing me?"

"No, no," said Dourakova. "You shall have them." Six curtains at the Summer Palace. Natasha burst into tears.

"There, there," said Dourakova. "You do not have to thank me. You are very pretty and we will find you a solo not too difficult, and, after all, six curtains it is not so many. I," she decided, "will have sixteen."

"Sssh," said Stroganoff urgently.

IN the Gold Room at the Summer Palace they had erected a stage. Its crimson curtain bore the Royal cipher and the proscenium arch held the Imperial Eagle's outstretched wings. But what was going on behind it closely resembled what went on behind any other proscenium before a performance—catastrophe and confusion.

For it is easy enough to chase off an ordinary small boy, who has managed to insert himself into the wings of a theatre and is taking an active interest in the preparations. But it is much less simple when the small boy happens to be the heir to the throne of Russia.

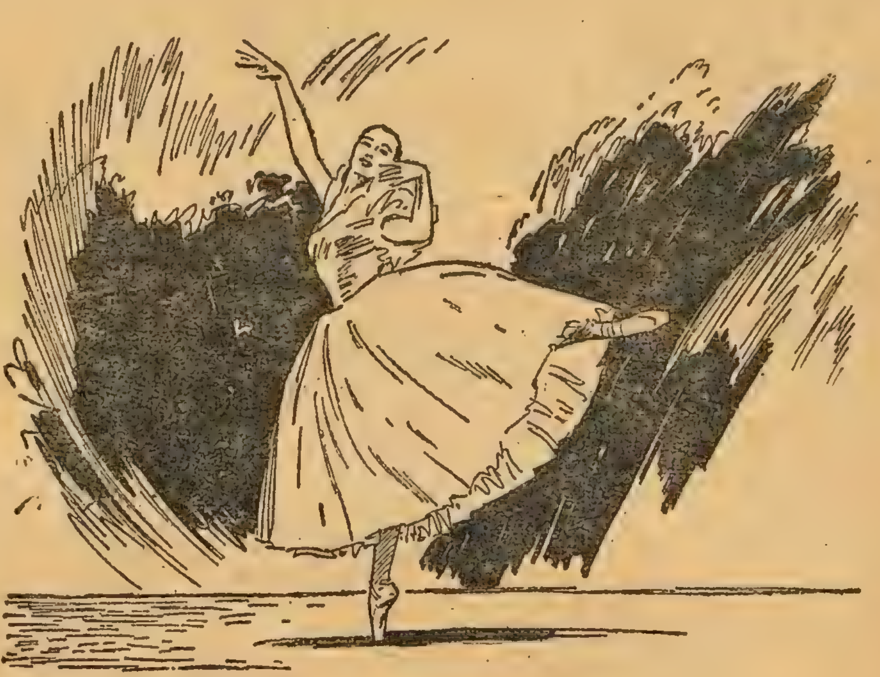
"Shoo, highness," pleaded Vladimir. "Shoo."

"Highness," begged Aliosha. "Where is your nurse?"

"Don't know," said the Tzarevitch. "Don't care." He poised a nail on a plank and reached for a hammer.

"Little boy run away," trebled Moysha.

A nurse came rushing across the stage, snatched the Tzarevitch from the nail, and held him to her bosom. "Highness—thank God I was in time." She turned on the Stroganoffs. "You should be under arrest. Nails indeed! Don't you know what happens if his Highness cuts himself?" She tucked him under her arms and waddled off.



The Stroganoffs groaned. They knew what would happen if his Highness cut himself. The whole of Russia knew that the Tzarevitch would bleed to death, that the doctors could do nothing, that only one man could stop the flow of blood with his blessed herbs: Rasputin.

The Stroganoffs mopped their brows. Practically on their way to Siberia!

THE Gold Room at Tzarskoe Selo was gold. So was the throne. Even the chairs were backed by golden eagles. And in this room the guests assembled—so much blue blood trapped out in so much bejeweled splendour! Princes and Dukes and Princesses and Duchesses.

Tzar and Tzaritza advanced to the throne. Behind them was Rasputin. The lights in the chandeliers faded away. The footlights glowed up. Music swept through the room.

"The rest is with God," said Vladimir Stroganoff.

"My son," said Aliosha heavily. "I am wishing I was in Omsk where there is only Abram to say we stink."

The curtain went up. On the stage shivering arms stiffened, quaking knees became rocks. Their Tzar was looking at them! . . .

Crossing herself furiously, Natasha's mamoushka stumbled over to the Stroganoffs. "Vladimir, pray with me." She extended her hand. Vladimir grasped it. For the first time they were in complete sympathy.

The difference between a good ballet company and a bad ballet company, Dourakova once said, is that the good has learnt to conceal the terrible.

The Ballet Stroganoff had learned this lesson well. The opening ballet was a dainty affair of buttercups and daisies to the music of Mendelssohn, with Natasha as a butterfly having her day. And as a butterfly, Natasha had no limitations. Crouching in the musicians' gallery

Grisha, the cheer-leader, relaxed. His assignment was not going to be so impossible after all.

In the wings Dourakova nodded approvingly.

On the stage the butterfly's day was nearly spent. She fluttered weakly but deliciously. She went into a wide spin, not too fast and getting slower and slower until at last she sank to the ground to a frightening silence. "Dear God!" panicked Natasha.

And then the Tzar nodded approvingly and the Tzaritza clapped. And then the generals applauded loudly. And then the whole Court joined in.

Radiant now, Natasha dropped a deep curtsey. The generals went on clapping. Natasha bowed and bowed.

The cheer-leader dropped his unneeded hands. "Pfui!" he said, "I have been wasting my time."

SIX curtains for Natasha.

The first curtain came down slowly and gave the company plenty of time to line up, curtsey deeply to the Tzar, bow radiantly to the audience and politely at one another. And the Court applauded warmly.

The second curtain belonged to the butterfly. Natasha took it alone. The Tzaritza was only nodding approvingly, but the Tzar was still clapping.

By the third curtain the Tzar was nodding approvingly. But the generals went on clapping.

As it came down a small boy in an English sailor suit joined the Stroganoffs in the wings. "I have come back," he announced. "Where is my hammer?"

"Aie!" said the Stroganoffs.

By the fourth curtain the going was heavier. For one thing the Stroganoffs were too preoccupied to help.

"Highness," pleaded Vladimir. "Not the nail. See—I have the sugar plum!" He fumbled in his pockets. Oh, why had he eaten them all?

The fifth curtain brought out the bouquets. The applause took on a fresh lease of life.

"Pretty lady," said the Tzarevitch, sighting the radiant butterfly. "I will give her some flowers." He pounced on a shield of roses due to be presented to Dourakova, dodged Vladimir's frantic grab and ran on to the stage.

The applause stopped dead. The Tzar rose. The Tzaritza put her hand to her heart.

"Flowers for the pretty lady," said the Tzarevitch, struggling to hold up the enormous shield.

And then he dropped it and was sucking his thumb.

Pandemonium! Doctors leapt to their feet, governesses streamed on to the stage. Generals trembled, the Tzar was shouting and the Tzaritza was beating her breast.

The Tzarevitch looked up. Hundreds of anxious faces swarming round. Clearly a tantrum was in order. He opened his mouth and gave of his best.

And Natasha stood unnoticed amidst her flowers. Five curtains, and the butterfly's day was spent.

In the end Rasputin consented to attend the child. He carried him to his vast nursery, and he stopped the bleeding with his blessed herbs and he calmed the child.

And after the Tzaritza had seen her son sleeping for herself and taken a sedative, and after the Tzar had taken a little something else, and everybody had given thanks to God, the performance was resumed.

The curtain went up. The divine Dourakova in Swan Lake.

"I was wrong," said Vladimir Stroganoff, standing in the wings. "I will apologize to Dumka. Doura is as good as Trefilova. Better."

"Doura," breathed General Dumka, transported.

On the stage the swans moved, arched and posed like the drilled swans of the Maryinsky. Never would you have guessed that their lake lay in Omsk. The swans gave way to their Queen, shaking the diamond drops from her feathers. Behind her the watchful, richly encrusted shadow of the Prince. But tonight no one remarked that he was no Nijinsky. Not that he was for a moment.

The fairy tale of tears moved to its tragic end. The curtain came down. The Tzar and the Tzaritza sighed.

The music came up and the curtain came down. . . .

Sixteen curtains! Grisha relaxed.

Seventeen . . . eighteen . . . nineteen.

"Enough," said the Tzar to his generals.

Twenty.

"And they say my word is law," sighed the Tzar. He looked at Dumka. "Ah, well." He joined in the clapping.

"AND that, my friend," Stroganoff told the sandy man, is how the Ballet Stroganoff danced for the Tzar. There has been nothing in my triumphant career to equal that glory."

"You must have felt very proud," said the sandy man.

"And very happy," said Stroganoff. "And all that night my Natasha is very tender and loving, and she do not call me a fool once." He sighed. "And yet, the next morning she is gone and there is only the letter she has left for me."

My husband:

When you read this I shall be on my way to Paris with Diaghilev. I have thought very long, but it is better so. I know you will think me cruel, Vladimir. Always you have done your best for me, and always it has ended in nothing. Always for you I will be the little wife first and the ballerina afterwards, and that way it will not work.

This is the end of our marriage and do not think that I do not care—but my career must come first.

Natasha.

"And so," Stroganoff told the sandy man "the Ballet Stroganoff came to London for more successes."

"And Natasha? What happened to her?"

"What happens to any ballerina?" Stroganoff shrugged. "She dances for this one, and she dances for that one, and presently she has a daughter and then it is the daughter who must have the six curtains. When I meet her after thirty-five years, it is the first thing that I hear. After that we remember the old days and we both cry a little." He blew his nose. "Pure gold, my Natasha."

The press agent put a winning head into the room. "Well?" he asked. "Settled your business?"

"Business!" Stroganoff remembered something. "But that is what I am here to do. Where is the rich one?"

The press agent coughed.

The sandy man shook himself into action. "Well, Mr. Stroganoff, I've enjoyed our little chat very much. It has been most instructive." He extended his hand.

Something hit Stroganoff. Maybe it was the press agent's expression. "It is you— the rich one?" he asked.

"Well . . ." said the sandy man.

"Ah," said Stroganoff, beaming vastly. "Why did you not tell me this earlier. Imagine," he told the press agent, "I have been telling him all our little secrets."

"Oh, my God!" said the press agent. He sat down.

Stroganoff turned to the sandy man. "You understand, of course, my friend, that all that I tell you happen long ago when my fortunes sway in the balance. To lose a backer then was a misfortune. To lose one now—poof!—there are a dozen others."

"I'm glad of that," said the sandy man.

"Yes," said Stroganoff. "Today, it is very different. My ballet it has the prestige, the renown, the tradition. My friend, I embrace you," he said, rising from his desk. "We are now the partners." He did.

"Good," said the press agent. "Let's have lunch on it."

"Wait a minute. . . ." said the sandy man.

"Come," said Stroganoff, "have the little lunch with me, and after I take you to meet my company. The little Stroganova!" He kissed his fingers. "Come."

"Wait a minute. Don't rush me."

"Rush you?" said Stroganoff. "Me!"

"Rush you?" said the press agent. "Him!"

"Now see here," said the sandy man. "I don't say I will back your ballet and I don't say I won't, but I do say that I will decide nothing until I've seen the books."

"The figures," said Stroganoff indulgently. "But of course you shall see them. But at the moment, my friend, it is quarter to three and I'm hungry."

"I too," said the press agent.

"Oh, well," said the sandy man, slipping. "But I'll want to see the figures first thing after lunch."

"Good," said Stroganoff. "After lunch."

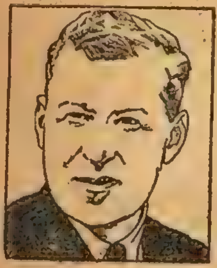
He linked his arm. The press agent linked the other arm. They led him out.

THE END

BOOKS IN REVIEW

By Helen Greenwood

YESTERDAY WILL RETURN, by **Tom Hanlin**, is the story of young Jamie Shearer who found work and Mima Frazer in a Scotch mining town. Mima was a widow, suspected by the village of having caused her husband's death. But to Jamie she was the one woman in the world. Simple, yet perceptive, Jamie confronted her with the gossip and was bewildered by her reaction, which by turns admitted and denied guilt. And then Bert McKelvie, a former lover, came back to town, and Mima, unable to choose between the two men, resorted to a shocking trick which cost her an unimagined price.

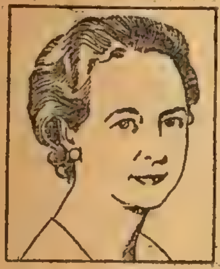


Tom Hanlin

Tom Hanlin, himself a Scotch miner, uses the apt, biting idiom of his people like an etcher's tool. Because the background of his story is so much part of himself, he sometimes labors too long over it. But he has felt it in his heart and in his muscles, and he is impelled to put its philosophy into words while the story waits. You forgive him. The story does not really suffer.

Viking Press, New York. Price $2.50.

MARJORIE WORTHINGTON'S The House on the Park is the story of the Oberdunk sisters, Daisy and Maude. Daisy was the mousy one, while Maude was gay, bold, and extremely flirtatious. But it was quiet Daisy who married dashing Gus Falks, the mining promoter, while Maude married her drab cousin, and when he died, the elderly Mr. Losch. Maude, however, finally got what she wanted.



Marjorie Worthington

The House on the Park is a period piece rather than a character novel. Set in the early 1900s, every last detail of the atmosphere is authentic and charming. Here is the New York of bric-à-brac, plumed hats, Rector's, and gas lamps, and these are the details that make Miss Worthington's book memorable and enjoyable.

Doubleday & Company, Inc., New York. Price $2.75.

JAMES POLLAK has lived in Hollywood for many years and as a screen writer has had ample opportunity to study the fantastic foibles of the fabulous city. To judge by his book, **The Golden Egg**, his years there have not been happy ones. Savagely and raucously written, it tells the story of the Levinson clan, their rise to fame and power in the film industry, and their fall, when Willie, the scion of the clan, double-crosses his father and uncle.

The Golden Egg is written in black and white—there are no half-tones in Mr. Pollak's book. The result is almost caricature, but despite that, the members of the Levinson family will remain impressed on the reader's mind.

Henry Holt & Company, New York. Price $3.

DEAR SIR OR MADAM, by **Juliet Lowell**, is described as a new collection of loony and wonderful American letters, and rightly so. Here is the letter to the O.P.A. saying: "Dear O.P.A.—My gentleman friend gave me a pair of Nylons yesterday, but I think the price I had to pay was above the O.P.A. ceiling. Please advise," and many others like it.

Duell, Sloan & Pearce, Inc., New York. Price $1.

QUIZZ-ICAL CROSSWORD

By Ted Shane

■	R	O	A	S	T	S	■	S	C	O	R	E	R	S
H	A	I	R	C	U	T	■	L	A	T	E	R	A	L
I	V	■	T	O	B	Y	■	E	R	I	E	■	M	E
P	I	G	■	W	A	L	L	E	T	S	■	B	P	E
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B	S	■	C	O	A	L	■	B	R	O	S	■	I	A
L	E	N	I	E	N	T	■	E	G	O	T	I	S	T
E	S	C	O	R	T	S	■	R	E	M	E	S	H	■

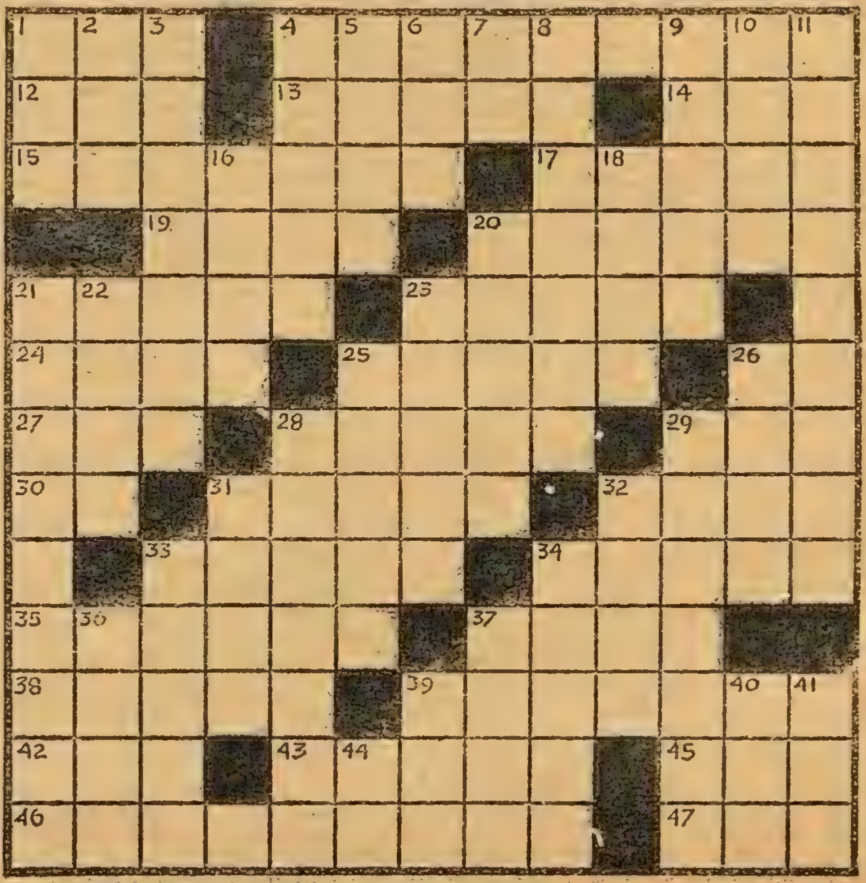
Last week's answer

HORIZONTAL

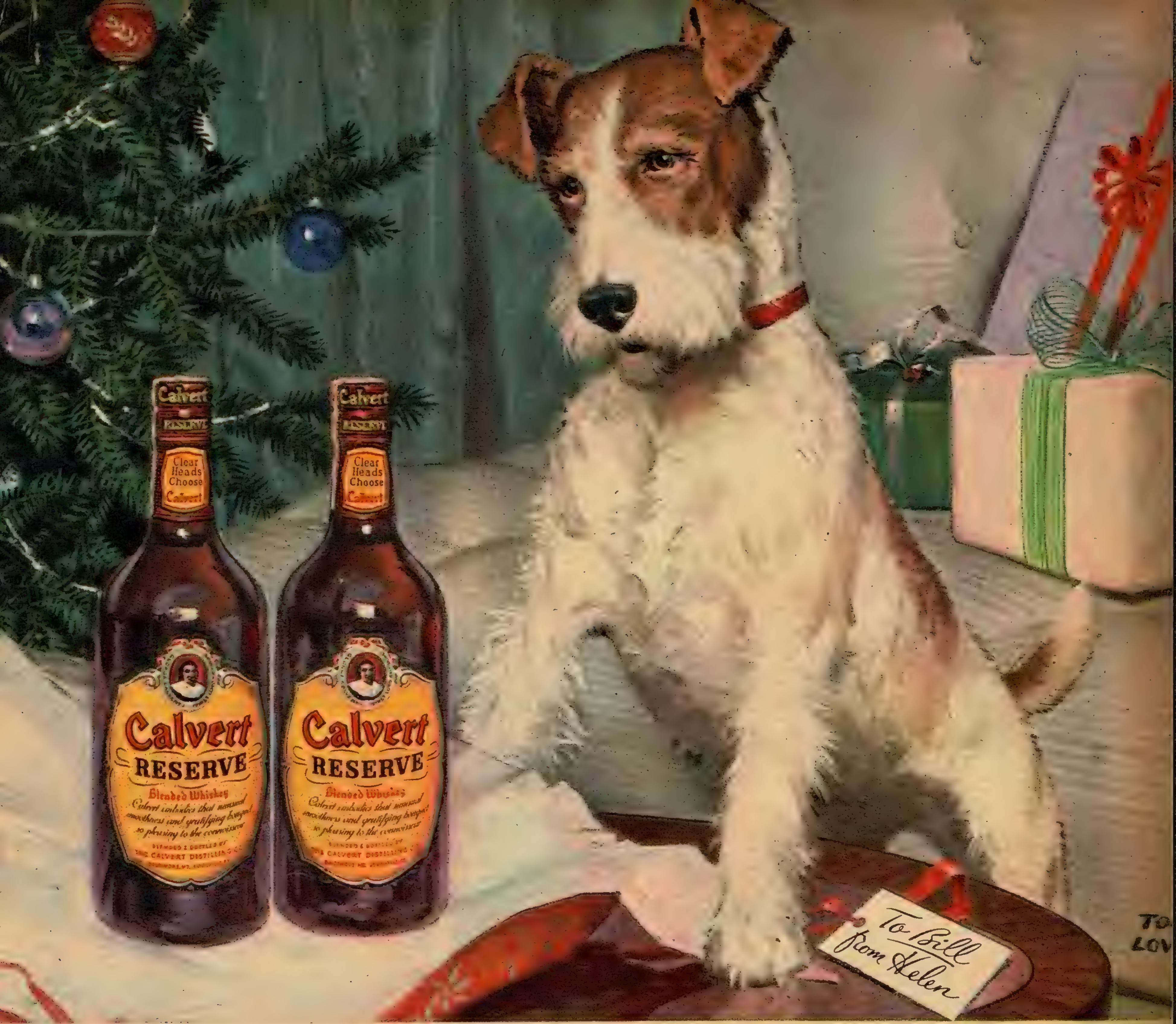
1 John who is guardian of the peace?
4 Who authored the Declaration of Independence?
12 Self important people are afflicted with a large what?
13 What constellation comes between Taurus and Pisces?
14 Complete: Long —— and Far Away
15 Doing a dog act in vaudeville
17 Thanks to Max Factor, age no longer does what on a woman?
19 What delicious fish buries itself in the sand when escaping from an enemy?
20 In 1829 the British abolished what Hindu barbarism?
21 Who was Lincoln's first Attorney General?
23 Complete: —— doing, bub?
24 *Sage* endures for eras (anag.)
25 Benjamin Perley who was a famed American journalist?
26 VI less than the LVII products
27 What would Bob Feller call a great pitch?
28 Name the greatest sap of energy
29 Take away 49 from a word meaning polite and what's left?
30 What Republican was the Stassen of his day? (abbr.)
31 The Bell Song, favorite of the coloratura, is from what opera?
32 All Brooklyn dies when the Bums do what?
33 What popular island resort is near New York City?
34 Lovely divorcees have lovely whats?
35 Substance separated from material in which it already existed (pl.)
37 The Cards truly made what out of whom during '46?
38 Whose rod budded when placed in the tabernacle?
39 Name a lovely glamor girl who died during the war in a plane accident
42 What's boxcars in Latin?
43 Beethoven's Fidelio is his only what?
45 A curbstone setter is a what?
46 Protons and whats are considered the basis of all matter?
47 What great patriot wrote Lord, with Glowing Heart I'd Praise Thee?

VERTICAL

1 What Oriental city is a great rug center?
2 Twin of Horizontal 14
3 Who is both a Revolutionary general and Wodehouse hero?
4 It's better to be on the outside looking into what, than vice versa?
5 Twin Irish lakes
6 What tree fed and clothed the ancients?
7 What's short for ferrum?
8 A firth or fjord is technically a what?
9 Preservatives, digestive aids, binaries, and sodium chlorides are whats?
10 Leer in *loge* (anag.)
11 What are very hard on flyers' schnozzolas? (two words)
16 People you love to hate
18 French diminutive
20 Jane who, mistress of Edward IV, might have been the original Amber?
21 An unglamor woman is called what cutting thing? (two words)
22 Seaweed product
23 Fruit from unsprayed trees is usually what?
25 Bundles carried on stick ends by migrants are whats?
26 Gilbert and Sullivan sang of having a critical little what?
28 Complete: Waste not, —— ——
29 What epithet does the bullying mounted policeman bring to lip?
31 Mexican nut
32 The fur, mouton, comes from what?
33 The movie biography of what lady did a critic subtitle "The Discovery of Tedium"?
34 What have terrifying screams, attack cattle but not humans, are also called painters?
36 Complete: —— Eireann
37 What Yesterday is a current New York hit show?
39 The Lip suggests what first name?
40 Poe wrote The Murders in the what Morgue?
41 Pussyfoot Johnson was a great what?
44 Proportionate Representation (abbr.)



The answer to this puzzle will appear in next week's issue.


Calvert RESERVE
Clear Heads Choose Calvert
Calvert RESERVE Blended Whiskey
Calvert RESERVE Blended Whiskey
To Bill from Helen

"Now he's got to get her a mink coat"

For the season's richest gift—or for all-around
whiskey agreeableness in your own holiday drinks,
you can't beat Calvert's magnificent flavor.
Remember . . . Calvert has blended more fine whiskey in its time
than any other distiller in America.
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Calvert

BLENDED WHISKIES

Reserve OR *Special*

Calvert Distillers Corp., N. Y. C. BLENDED WHISKEY 86.8 Proof. "Reserve"—65% Grain Neutral Spirits..."Special"—72½% Grain Neutral Spirits

SOMETHING NEW IN LABOR

Continued from Page 13

the refinery. Almost starry-eyed with pride and faith in C.U.A., he took me home with him for a long evening of questions and answers.

He said, "Let's begin with the reason for independent unions—and there are thousands of them all over the country. In the oil industry alone, about 85 per cent of the workers are independent of either A.F.L. or C.I.O. These unions are independent because they just can't see either of those affiliations. Some of them had had bitter experience with jurisdictional strikes and fights in A.F.L.—strikes that cut off their pay when they really wanted to keep on working, and fights that made them pay stiff initiation fees to three or four unions in one single year. Every time your job changes a fraction in A.F.L., you've got to join a new union and put your money on the line. Some of them couldn't take the political fights in C.I.O. any longer.

"SO they kept their unions independent or, if they had joined up with one of the big organizations, they pulled out.

"But that wasn't the answer, either. An independent union has got a lot of strikes on it. I know, because I belong to one. I'll call them for you: First, independent unions get no representation in the labor affairs of the government. On the National Labor Relations Board and the War Man Power Commission and half a dozen other Washington agencies, A.F.L. and C.I.O. have representatives sitting. Seven million members of independent unions are supposed to channel their ideas through the so-called Representative of the Public. Second, suppose an independent union goes before the NLRB with a grievance. The first question asked is: 'Is the membership of your union confined to the employees of one corporation?' And if the answer is yes, then it is automatically assumed that the union is company dominated, a company union, even though it isn't at all. The case is thrown out, the union disestablished, and either C.I.O. or A.F.L. moves into that plant to take charge.

"Strike three: Independent unions, if they stay isolated, have no way of influencing labor legislation. No single one of them is big enough to have a voice in the labor problems facing the Congress. And I'll even give you strike four: Isolated independents have no way of exchanging information between themselves—comparative wage rates in an industry, production prospects, raw materials, commodity prices, and so on—the facts that are absolutely necessary when it comes to drawing up a new one-year contract with the management."

He went on to say that the people who started this organization were determined that it must be truly democratic. They made certain that it would be run from the bottom up, instead of from the top down.

The provisions of its constitution, indeed, are so forthright and simple in their democracy as to be almost startling:

C.U.A. has absolutely no authority over any affiliated union. Each individual union remains completely autonomous. It may charge whatever dues it pleases, elect its own officers in any way it prefers, write its own constitution and bylaws. Each union may strike when it decides to, without interference from C.U.A. The only time C.U.A. ever concerns itself with the affairs of an individual affiliate is when that affiliate invites aid from the national organization—advice or moral support. C.U.A. has no war chest and will not give financial aid to striking affiliates—although member unions may, if they wish, give such aid out of their own funds.

It is specifically provided that there shall be no paid organizers or agitators. And the executive officers and members of the executive board *must* be actual workmen at their trade, not professional labor leaders.

In all of C.U.A. there are three paid employees. One is Harry Eller, on leave from his independent steelworkers union in Wisconsin to serve as secretary-director in the very modest Washington offices of the organization. He has two girl clerks. He is paid $5,000 a year—which is the top salary limit for any paid official C.U.A. may ever hire.

Wynn said, "Here's the reason for that limitation: We feel that an official can't honestly understand the problems of the rank and file of labor when he's pulling down thirty or forty thousand dollars a year, like some of those big shots do. We're all human. Accustom yourself to rich living and it's hard to feel the pinch affecting the fellows you're supposed to represent."

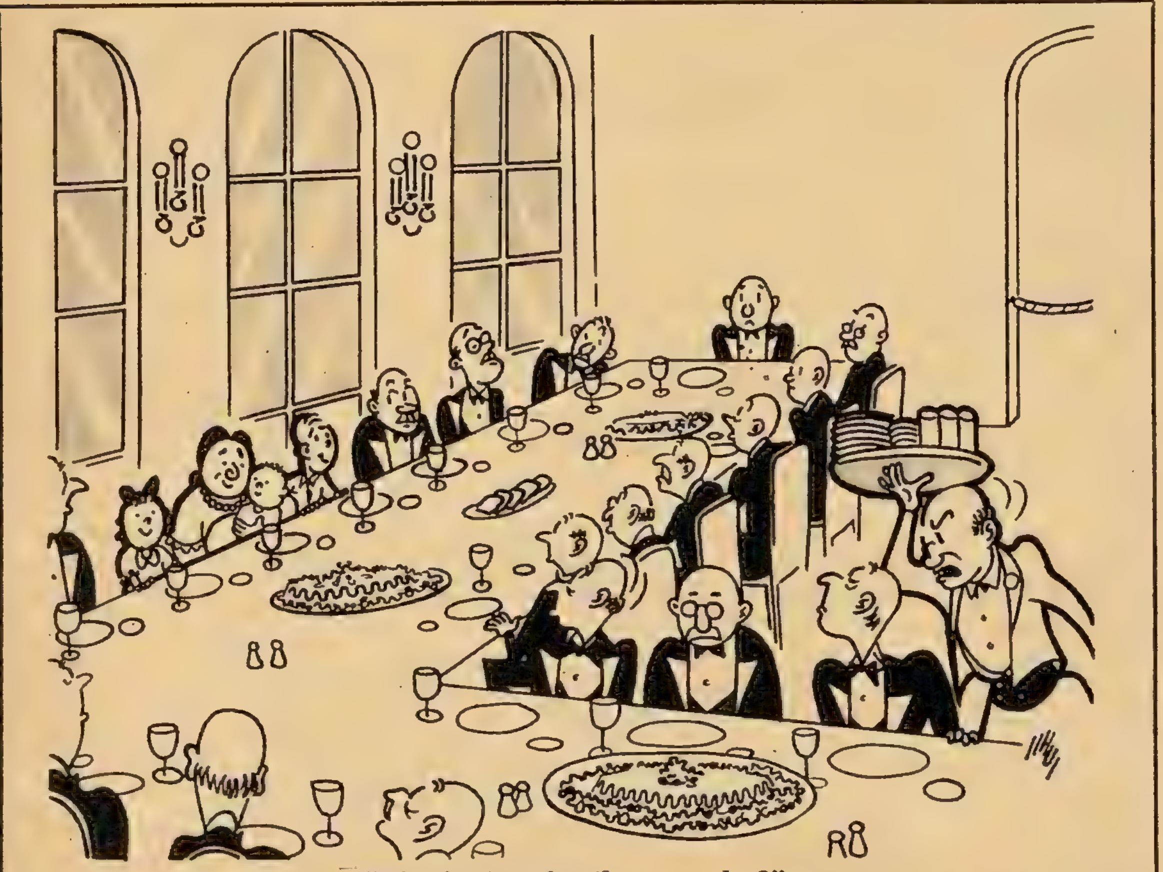
BY a simple device, the constitution has made it very tough for an official of C.U.A. to perpetuate himself in office: He can't appoint any paid employee to anything—he hasn't any patronage—he can't set up a hierarchy of paid stooges.

Each union affiliated with C.U.A. elects one of its members to the executive board. On that board, the Anti-Friction Bearing Workers' Union of Philadelphia, with 400 members, has exactly one vote, the same as the Central States Petroleum Workers' Union has, with 30,000 members. The board does all the appointing of paid help. And of course, as C.U.A. grows, more paid help will be needed. Already the demands of affiliates for information and advice have swamped the little Washington office staff. And already senators and congressmen are calling around to pay their respects—to request an outline of C.U.A's legislative program for the Eightieth Congress.

It costs an independent union twenty-five dollars to join C.U.A. Thereafter, each member must pay to the national organization exactly three cents a month. This compares rather startlingly with the seventy-five cents a month which every member of the Auto Workers' Union must pay to C.I.O. Furthermore, the constitution provides that there shall be no extra assessments at any time.

We spoke of the Washington conference and the interested visitors from non-C.U.A. independent unions who were there. Although these men were not yet prepared to commit their organizations to C.U.A., they

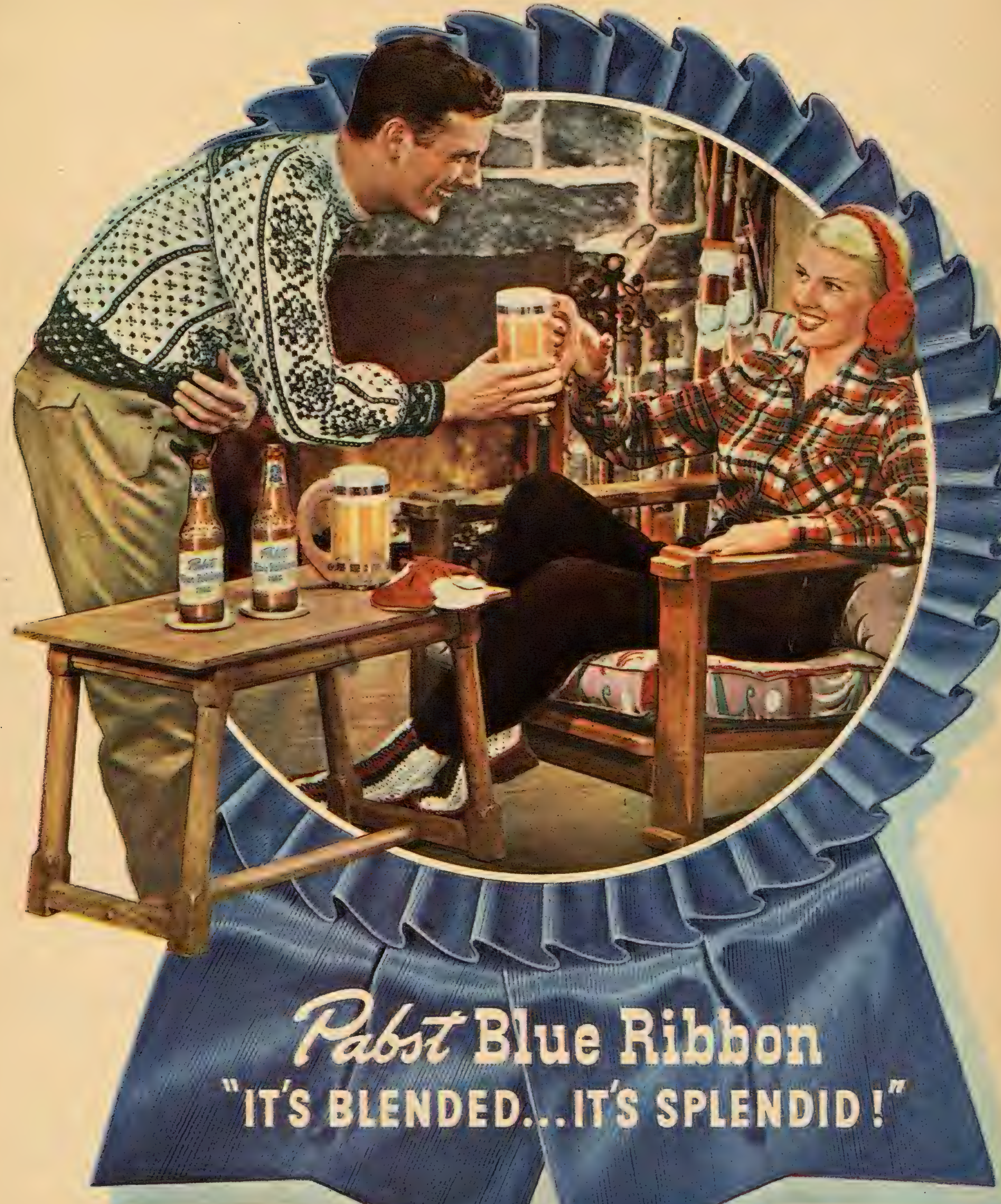
(*Continued on page 54*)


"They're my family . . . why?"

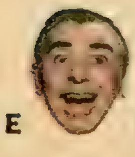
LIBERTY

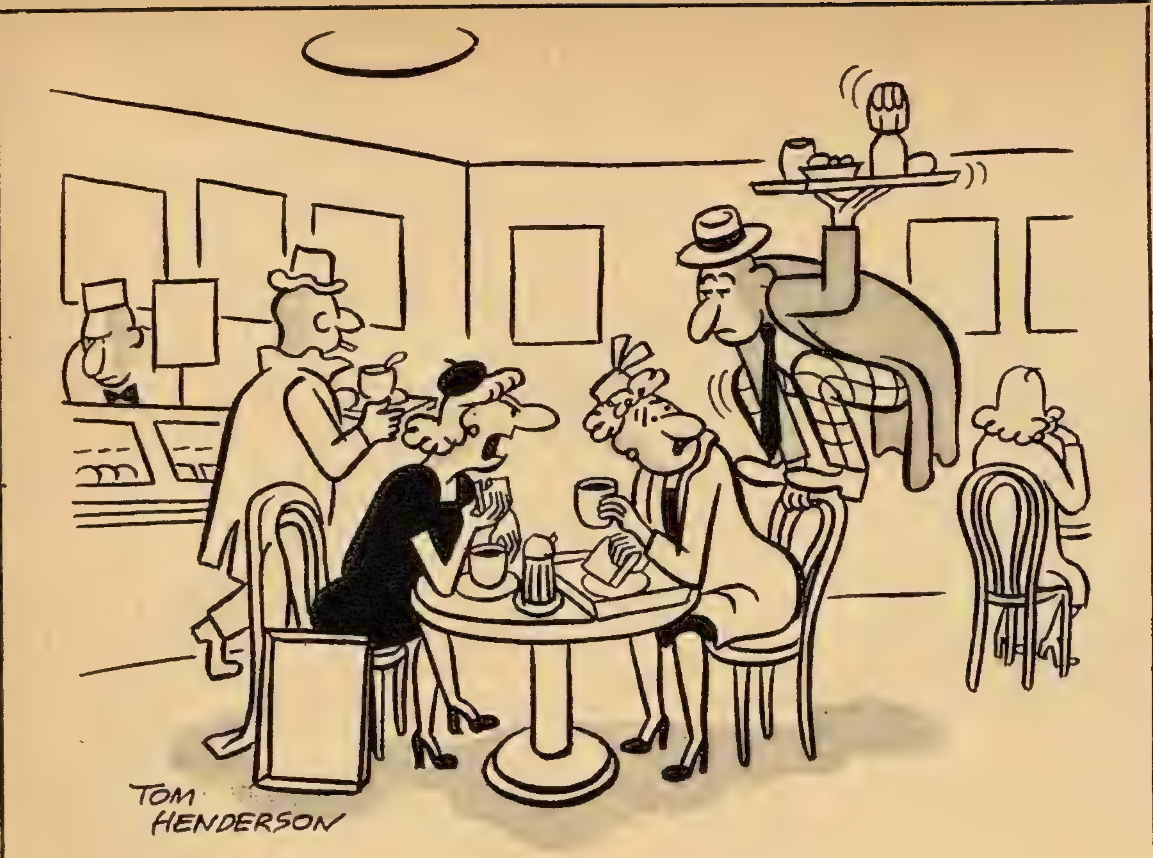
33 FINE BREWS BLENDED INTO ONE GREAT BEER

Order it with Confidence . . . Serve it with Pride


Pabst Blue Ribbon
"IT'S BLENDED...IT'S SPLENDID!"

Copr. 1946, Pabst Brewing Company, Milwaukee, Wisc.

TUNE IN THE  EDDIE CANTOR SHOW . . . EVERY THURSDAY, 10:30 PM EST . . . COAST TO COAST NBC



"Just take your time, kiddo—don't let 'em rush ya!"

LIBERTY

(*Continued from page 52*)

were encouraged to participate in the floor debates and discussions, and some of them even introduced resolutions. One or two from the larger unions were critical of the low per capita dues. "We can never build up a real fund if we charge only three cents a month," they protested.

It was carefully explained to them that C.U.A. had no desire at all to build up a bank account. "That would put it in the exact position of A.F.L. and C.I.O.," the chairman said. "And that is the last thing on earth we want."

MANY of the representatives who attended that conference, and who obviously were impressed by the honesty and simplicity of C.U.A.'s organization, have since brought their unions into active affiliation. New unions come in almost every day. And there have been at least four instances of unions which voted to reject their C.I.O. affiliation and cast their lot with C.U.A.

Each applicant for membership is investigated (by men from neighboring C.U.A. unions, who receive no pay for their work), to be certain of two things: that it has established itself as bargaining agent in an NLRB election; and that it is not a company union or company dominated.

Wynn is thirty-seven, educated in the public schools of Baltimore, where he was born, and has worked in the Standard Oil refinery since he was nineteen.

His father works there too, and so do three brothers, all of whom have been there longer than he. When he was first elected to the vice-presidency of C.U.A., two years ago, he began to take his union leadership seriously. He had been for a considerable time president of his own local independent union. Now he set out to extend his education and enrolled at Johns Hopkins University in two extension courses: labor management and personnel management.

"I was the only labor man in the personnel course," he said. "The rest were all from management. I learned as much from the fellows studying with me as I did from the books. I got the management's slant on some things I hadn't understood before, and I feel pretty sure I got over some of labor's ideas to them. Anyway, I got a hell of a lot out of those courses."

At the Chicago convention the question arose on the floor: "What is the over-all policy of C.U.A.?"

The answer was specific: "We have got only one basic policy now: that is to fashion a strong, forceful federation, free of racketeering and political evils. We have got to have other policies, of course. But we are not going to fix them now. We are growing at a tremendous rate. We are not asking new affiliates to join something that already has a lot of fixed policies. We are asking them to come in, join us, and then participate in the making of future policy."

There is, of course, one other basic policy in C.U.A.—the reason for its being, indeed. When disputes occur between management and affiliates of A.F.L. or C.I.O, the business agent of the A.F.L or the regional director of C.I.O.—professional labor leaders who may never have been in the plant before—are called in to carry on negotiations. The independents feel that this immediately causes a division and rasps feelings.

"In one of our plants," Wynn said, "we feel this way: 'Hell, management is refining oil—or making airplanes—or packing meat—just like we are. We all understand what the business is about. We can sit down and talk to them, and they know us, and we generally get what we want. The A.F.L. guy or the C.I.O. outsider may keep you out on strike for weeks, off the payroll, while he gains some point like the closed shop or a check-off. We're interested in our folks, not in ideologies. Maybe that's the reason so many independents are coming in with us.' "

At the Chicago convention, delegates to C.U.A. passed resolutions condemning Communism, Socialism, and racketeering in labor practices. Resolutions recommending that the Social Security age limit be reduced from sixty-five to fifty-five years and the benefits increased to $125 a month were promptly voted down.

This would seem to indicate that C.U.A. is an organization of conservatives among the men and women who labor.

On the other hand, it is determined to gain certain rights, as outlined in the program of objectives laid out in Chicago:

The first of these is insistence upon representation equivalent to that of A.F.L. and C.I.O. in the Department of Labor and all government agencies administering labor laws, particularly in NLRB.

Next, C.U.A. insists that the cuts in appropriations imposed upon NLRB by the last Congress be restored, because the economies have reduced efficiency and cases are piling up. On-the-job training for veterans should be extended. Locked-out workers should be entitled to unemployment compensation. New speed-up systems being introduced by management should be carefully examined to make certain that they do not increase hazard of injury.

AS the organization expands it is inevitable that it will be subject to attack by the organizers of A.F.L. and C.I.O. Indeed, the attacks have already begun.

Wynn laughed. "In one pretty big plant," he said, "an NLRB election came up to decide whether our independent union there or a C.I.O. union would be certified as bargaining agent. The C.I.O. people put on a two-week electioneering campaign—tons of literature and speakers from outside and plenty of hullabaloo. We couldn't put on a show like that. All we could do was talk what seemed like sense to us.

"It looked pretty tight as election day came around, but then the C.I.O. made a mistake. They brought up a big lunch wagon and offered free lunch to everybody that would vote C.I.O. But right on the lunch wagon in big letters it was written: 'Free lunch furnished by courtesy of the Communist Party.' That cooked it. People wouldn't even eat the damn lunch, and we won by about three to one."

And that, really, is the basic faith the C.U.A. is founded on: that American working men and women are "jealous of their independence."

THE END

CULTURE HOUNDS

Continued from Page 17

voice tinkled sweeter than a dinner bell. "Mr. Sox, will you bring my case and open it, please?"

Stan came forward, walking like somebody hit over the head with a sledge, and opened her gritchel on the kitchen floor. The book lady lifted a volume almost as big as she was.

"Here," she tinkled, "is the world's greatest knowledge at your fingertips. History, science, literature, zoology—"

The boarding misses rocked and listened. "You got poultry?"

"Poultry?" The book lady brightened. "Oh, yes. That would be indexed—let me see—under fowls—"

"Baseball—goodt," said Joe Kick.

The boarding missus wagged her chins. "No—no. Not cheeckens and docks poultry. Nodder kind. My oncle was readink all the time poultry before he went crazy. One time he's readink me 'The boy stoodt on the bornink deck—' "

"Cardts? Goodt!" The Bronk blinked.

"Oh. Po-et-ry." The book lady got her smile back. "You will find all the world's greatest poets included in the Little Giant Encyclopedia. Here's Henley," she said, and began to read: " 'Out of the night that covers me, Black as the pit from pole to pole—' "

"Now you're talkin' my language," I said.

She looked surprised. "Oh—you know Invictus?"

"Never heard of him," I said. "But you can't tell me about them Poles in the pit. Of all the dumb bohunks that ever nubbed a shovel, it's Kick and Kopec and the Bronk there. Why—" I said.

The book lady closed the Little Giant Encyclopedia hard. "If it's convenient with you gentlemen," she said, turning to the others, "I'll come back later." She got up to go.

"Miss Strompbork," said Jan Kopec, "is convenient wit' os tomorrow nat."

"You bat," said Joe Kick.

The Bronk only blinked.

WORD of the book lady traveled underground next morning like a spark exploding a seam of gas. At noon when we knocked off for cold coffee and salami between two slabs of bread, Jan Kopec and Joe Kick came down from No. 10 Right, and Pete Kopsac and Anton Hovak stopped their motor in front of our place. I load with the Bronk. Before we'd even opened our buckets Stan Sox had joined us, and McManus, the section boss, stopped by to listen.

"She's sall for savanty dollars, twalve boooks in sat!" Stan sounded awed.

"A set of twelve books for seventy dollars." McManus grinned. "But you can't read, Stan."

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Stan shifted his mouthful. "Wat the hell? Who's readink? I buy for shot-put paper. Boook lady's tell me it's bargain for savanty dollars. She's tell me I save money to buy now, boooks pay for themsalf. So I buy now, save t'irty, maybe t'irty-five dollars, and get shot-put paper besides."

"Migawd!" said McManus hoarsely.

It was all a big joke to Jan Kopec. His laugh exploded under his ribs. "Every man is for himself. Huh, Alex?"

"Listen," I said sourly. "You dumb bohunks ain't got a chance. With Miss Stromberg, the best man wins."

Jan Kopec winked around at the others. "Sure. You bat. Too badt, Alex, you're not bast man."

I could feel my hackles rising. "A half's pay says you big heaves don't stand a chance with the dame. A half's pay says little Alex bumps you bohunks outa the running before you even get set on your big flat feet."

I stuck out my jaw. "Any takers?" I yapped.

"Sure," said Jan Kopec. "Here's one. I'm battink."

"Here's nodder one," said Joe Kick.

Sometimes, for a little gaff that likes the feel of dough sticking to his fingers, I've got too much jaw. "What's the matter?" I bawled at the others. "Scared of betting against a sure thing?"

That night after the book lady had passed me the cold shoulder all evening, I began to wonder how much of a sure thing I had. I took a five-buck bill from my pocket and looked at the picture of Lincoln. He sure looked sad.

THE way the book lady treated me was worse than a collector from the finance company when you come out too short for him on payday. You'd have thought Kick and Kopec and the Bronk could pay cash, the way she worked on them. But she hadn't made a sale, in spite of the way she played up to them. Those bohunks weren't so dumb, at that.

As soon as she left the boardinghouse I beat it down to Steve Pop's and paid five bucks for a bottle of raw rye and played the pinball machines. I had some thinking to do. I watched the oranges and lemons jump up and jiggle, and after a while, when I was out about ten bucks and no closer to a scheme, I stopped feeding quarters into the slug hole and went over to a corner table and sat down. Somehow I'd have to bumboozle those bohunks into believing I was Don Johnny with that dame, or I was going to be out a lot of dough. Along about midnight it hit me all of a sudden. A scheme. Wasn't I the little grifter that was always yelling a head is better than hulk? I was so proud of myself, I left a buck for Steve on the table.

Like I knew they would, the big

bumskies tried to pin the razz on me, but for once, I took it.

"Laugh, you big lugs," I said. "Little Alex ain't played his ace."

When quitting time came I got out on the first man trip and high-tailed it up Hardtack Knob. A half hour later, in a clean shirt and a pair of pants I'd pressed by keeping them under the mattress for just such occasions, I beat it up Pick-handle Hill and whapped my knuckles on Ma McGarity's screen door. In a matter of minutes the book lady traipsed into the parlor. When she saw me her face under the little ribbon in her yellow hair got colder than boardinghouse food.

"A man have to sign anything to buy them encyclopedies?" I asked.

"Why, Mr.—"

"Just call me Alex," I said.

"Why, Mr. Alex, you're interested in contracting for a set?"

"Well," I said, "not right this minute. But I know where I can get you some John Henrys."

HER face began to thaw. "You have some prospective buyers in mind?"

"Yeah," I said. "Give me whatever they have to sign and I'll be back with their John Doe's in less time than it takes a woman to change her mind."

I had three contracts in my pocket when I got back to the boardinghouse and found Jan Kopec standing six-feet-three-and-three-quarters naked in a galvanized washtub scrubbing at the mine grime, while Kick and the Bronk, stripped to their waists, waited their turns with the hot-water kettles.

"Whose waddink?" said Jan Kopec, giving the eye to my clean shirt.

I tried to kick up my brow the way he did his. "Maybe mine. Who knows?" I said.

He laughed fit to bust. "Little Alex never gat married—waddink lisants cost two bocks—"

I let him rib me. Cool as an underground seepage, I took the contracts from my pocket. Jan Kopec looked at them and then at me and stopped laughing.

"Is waddink lisants?" he asked.

"Nup," I said.

The Bronk walked over and blinked at them. I knew he couldn't read a word of the contracts, and neither could the others, and I almost sprained my face to keep from grinning.

"Wat is?" said Joe Kick.

"These?" I stuffed the contracts back in my pocket. "Nothin' much. Just some petitions to get the super to give free beers every second Tuesday after shifts to the undersigned. That's all," I said.

"Is *all?*" Jan Kopec came splashing out of the tub. "Give me paper! Come on, Joe and Bronk, gat free beer!"

I waved them away. "Me and some other guys—"

Two minutes of acting hard to persuade and I had them on the dotted line.

"Sometimes, Alex," Jan Kopec said, blowing on his signature, "I almos' think you're my goodt fran."

When I reached Ma McGarity's I found the book lady waiting on the front porch. I handed her the contracts.

"There you are, lady. Signed, sealed, and delivered."

She made admiring eyes at me, and then she read the signatures and her eyes got big as beer caps. "But last night they said— They must have changed their minds—"

I grinned. "I got a way with me, lady."

She studied me admiringly a moment, and then she said, "How suh-weet of you, Mr. Alex! I don't see how you did it."

"That's just the point," I told her. "It sure took some fixin'." From there on, I decided honesty wasn't the best policy. "The way it is with them big muscle-bound meat eaters, they don't like to let on about things like books. Somebody, like Kick or Kopec, if they owned a book and it was heard about, they'd never live it down. So I had me a little talk with each one separate, and worked out this scheme for each one to get the books and no one know it but me, and I'm their buddy. All you got to do now, lady, is deliver."

She came up closer and something in her hair smelled sweeter than bay rum with lilac in it. Down in the valley the tipple riveted the summer day with its clang-hammer thunder. I thought for a minute it was my heart.

"And what about the payments, Mr. Alex, to bind the contracts?"

I had it all figured out. By the time payday came round again and these bohunks found out what they'd bought, the book lady would be only a sweet little memory in Outcrop.

"All you got to do to get your dough," I said, "is take these contracts to the scrip office. They'll deduct your money over the payroll—it's the way we buy things in Outcrop."

"How convenient!" She turned on the high-pressure charm. "Don't you, Mr. Alex, want to profit by the same plan?"

"Not me, lady." I grinned and winked at her so she'd get my point. "I'm a hard customer to crack. I got more sales resistance than boiler-plated hardware. You'll have to work on *me,* lady."

She twinkled at me. "I certainly will, Mr. Alex. Tonight. And, Mr. Alex, *thank you* for the other sales!"

"Don't mention it, lady," I said. "Just don't mention it—to anybody. That's all I ask."

THAT evening her smile went around the kitchen like a dish of something sweet to eat, but it was me she spooned it out to. All evening while she worked on me I listened to the sound of cash. It was in the growls Jan Kopec muttered every now and then, and in Joe Kick's grunts and the way Bronk breathed out and in like a ventilator with asthma. They couldn't get it, seeing her chair pulled up close to mine and all that sweet talk sugaring little Alex's ears. I sat there dreaming about the two bushel baskets full of kale I'd collect on those bets, and listening to the book lady's two-dollar words as she worked the Little Giant pitch on me.

"For instance, Mr. Alex, there might be an occasion when you would want to study the hystricomorphic division—"

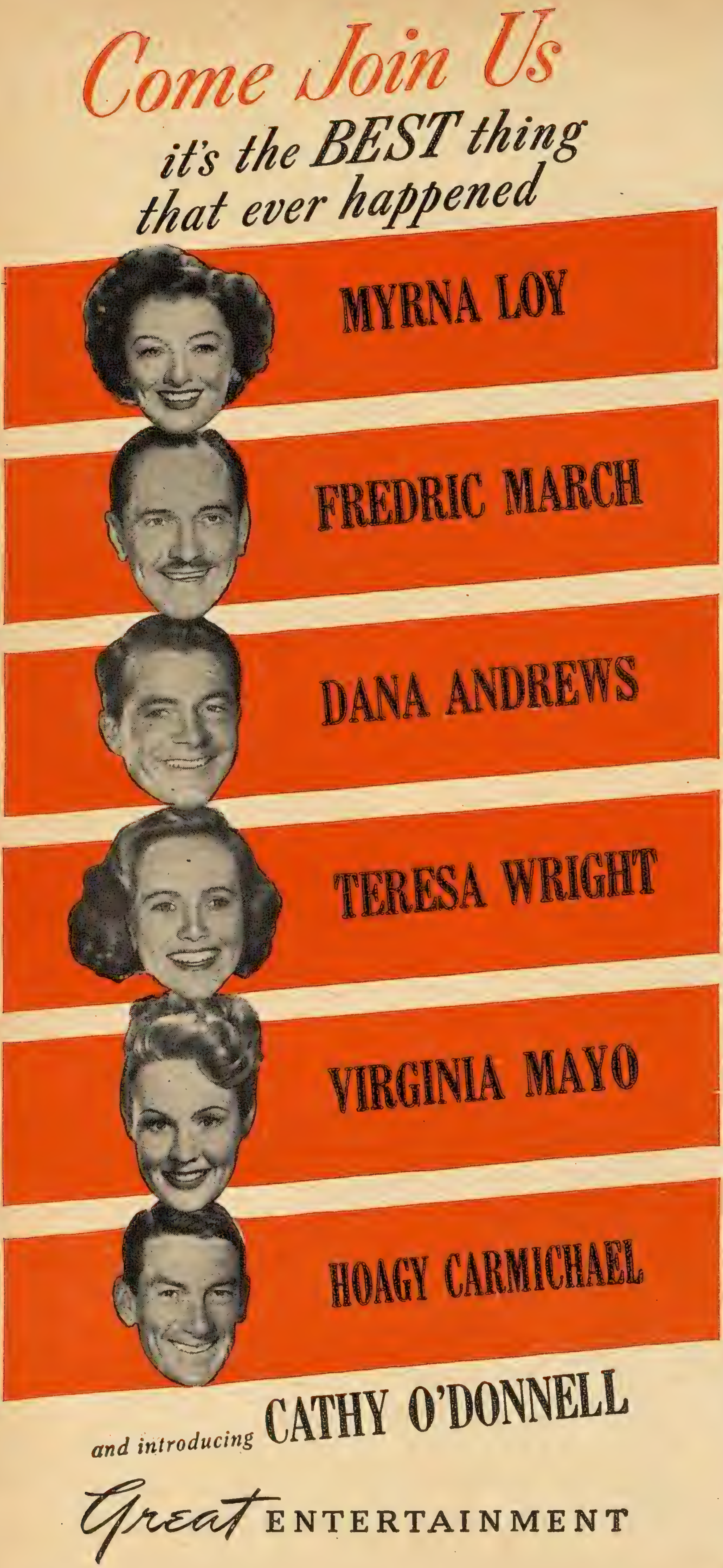
"Yeah?" I said.

"The hystricomorphic is a division of rodents (suborder *Simplicidentata*) of which the porcupine is a member."

AT
AT
OE
NCH
MACDONALD

"Now, that's what I call a sandwichman."

LIBERTY



"Yeah?" I tipped back my chair and put my feet on the table. "Lady, I'm a coal loader. What would I want to know about porcupines for?"

"We can always add to our knowledge, Mr. Alex," by studying the habits of the lower orders. For instance, a porcupine defends itself by sticking others."

My feet hit the floor. I inspected her face closer than a safety boss searching the mine for hot wiring, but her smile was sweeter than store-bought cake.

IN my two-buck shirt with the stripes and my hair slicked back, I set off to Dominick Dimicienzski's the next night, feeling like a kid going to his first party. Dom had just married off his daughter, Annie Dim, and the Polish wedding, which lasts three days in Outcrop, is a time of "Wine, womans, and sonk," as Jan Kopec says. I always enjoy myself at a Polish wedding, because everything is free, and tonight I'd be romping through my polkas with the book lady.

The way I figured it, with her wanting to get me on the dotted line before she left Outcrop tomorrow, and with me still playing hard-to-get, I was jake to polka about every polka with her. Which would make me without a doubt Don Johnny with this daisy, and tomorrow I'd collect. What she didn't know was, when she turned to wave us good-by tomorrow, I'd still be a holdout. Because anybody as brainy as me, what does he have to buy books to find out about porcupines for?

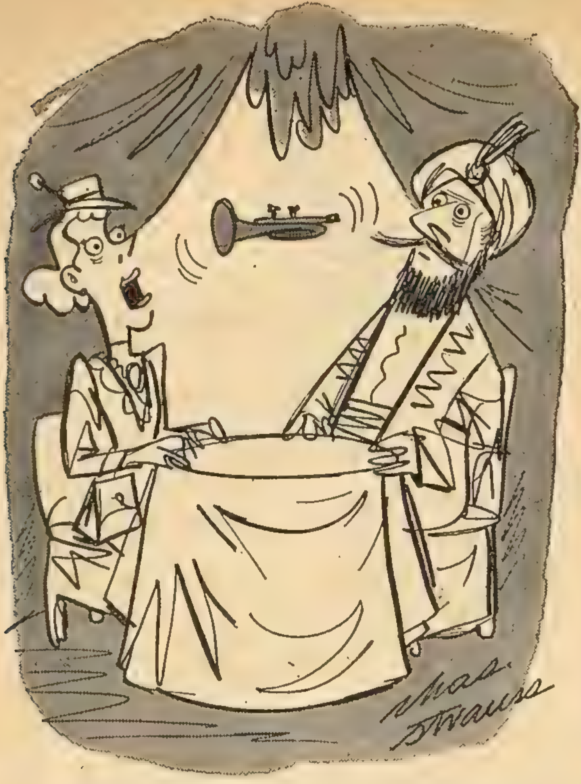
I left the boardinghouse early to get a head start on my three bumble-brained buddies, but by the time I got to Dominick's, Jimmy Arena's Polish-American String Quartet was sawing away even faster than the raw rye flowed. I pushed my way through the babble and spotted the book lady bouncing by in a polka with Stan Sox. She was already the belle of the brawl. Kick, Kopec, and the Bronk were nowhere around.

The principle of Stan's polka is a half-hitch hop, with one big mauling foot not letting on to the other where it is or where it's going. When Stan stopped grappling with her, the book lady took one look at the big rollicking bohunks closing in on her, and beat it over to me. Romping her around and smelling that stuff in her hair, I almost forgot about putting in my claim for those bets to Kick, Kopec, the Bronk, and company. I wondered where the big heaves were, and then all at once I stopped wondering. The book lady lifted her face and started breathing into my ear:

"The Little Giant Encyclopedia is fully illustrated and indexed for instant reference—"

This was sure my night. For a while it was.

IN Outcrop, any time as many as two rowdies get together and the raw rye flows, there's bound to be a



"That isn't him. My husband played the tuba."

LIBERTY

rumpus. I heard it first in the other room where Annie Dim in her bridal veil was passing out kisses.

"Tch-tch," I clucked to the book lady. "Listen at them big beefs bawl."

"Oh, dear." The book lady's eyes got big again." "Does anybody ever get hurt?"

In answer to her question there was an uproar in the other room that blasted Annie Dim through the doorway, followed by a shrill of other women. Then Dominick's home resounded with a shattering smash which meant that six feet of somebody's brawn had met the jolt of a sledge-driving fist. Before I could even turn tail and dive for cover, a wild-haired yowl exploded in the doorway, and it was Kick, Kopec, and the Bronk who came crashing through.

JAN KOPEC slammed to a stop and let out a bawl. "W'ere's little Tomp Thump? W'ere's little shrimp Alex brain-boster?"

I tried to hide behind the book lady, but he'd already spotted me.

"Ha!" he roared, and with a big paw reached over and grabbed hold of my scruff, the Bronk and Joe Kick closing in. "W'at's mak' you rob your boddies?"

"What you mean?" I squeaked.

He breathed like a bellows, his trick right brow slashed down over his eye. Then he remembered the book lady. "Oxcuse os, Miss Strompbork. We are speakink to Alex outside."

He hauled me out onto the porch, the Bronk and Joe Kick flanking our exit. By the dim light I could make out the print on a square of card he poked under my nose. On the card was a picture of a lot of books, and the print read: "The Little Giant Encyclopedia Incorporated thanks you for your purchase of this in-

... and it happens to YOU in

"THE BEST YEARS OF OUR LIVES"

Produced by SAMUEL GOLDWYN
Directed by WILLIAM WYLER
Screen play by ROBERT E. SHERWOOD
From a novel by MacKINLAY KANTOR
Released thru RKO Radio Pictures

IN THE Goldwyn MANNER!

valuable set of books." Below the printing, in the book lady's neat little handwriting, the card added: "This is my personal and confidential way of expressing my gratitude. You may rely on me to respect your confidence. Mr. Alex explained everything to me, and made all the necessary arrangements."

"Who's payink?" Joe Kick yelped.

My pipes almost plugged up. "Who signed?" I squalled.

"Os." Jan Kopec bounced me up and down. "For free beer on sacond Tuesday." He busted out in a big laugh. "Little Alex, so smart as avertink—now he's buyink our Little Giant Twalve Wollums and free beer on sacond Tuesday besides?"

"I'm not buyin' nothin'!" I yapped hoarsely.

"Books you're buyink," he said. "W'at the hell? Who's wantink boooks that can't read?"

"You can use 'em for shot-put paper," I squawked desperately.

He poked me in the solar plexus. "You're buyink boooks, or we use little Alex for shot-put paper. Sompbody got to pay for boooks Miss Strompbork sall. Nobody's lattink down Miss Strompbork, Alex!"

I TOOK a look at my three bone-crushing buddies. "O.K.," I piped. "What you want me to do? Write a check?"

Jan Kopec grinned. "Ho, Alex. W'at you t'ink—I'm two times dumb? No. Tomorrow you come sign at scrip office. We see. No?" He cocked his brow at Joe Kick and the Bronk.

I saw. He let me go, and all I could think of now was those bets. I couldn't win, but maybe I didn't have to lose.

I busted back inside to find the book lady.

"Sister," I said, "let's romp one."

She was out of my arms before I could say "Little Giant Encyclopedia."

"I've already danced with you, Mr. Alex," she said sweetly, "and I think I should devote the rest of my evening to those I am most grateful to. I think you know"—she turned to my three bulk-busting buddies standing there—"what it is I'm referring to."

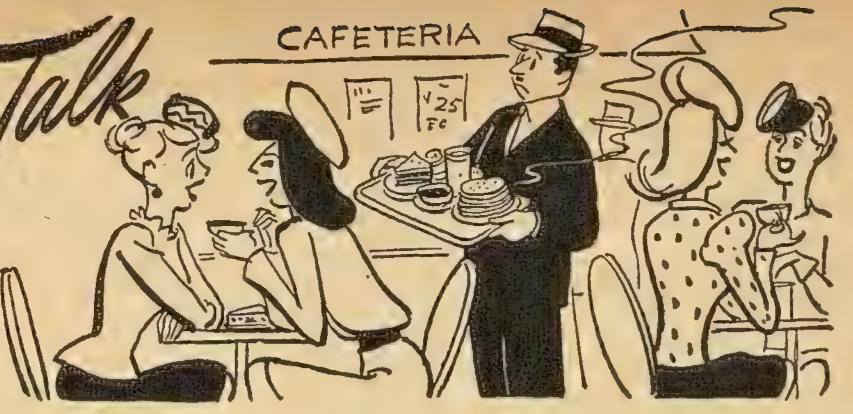
Jan Kopec laughed his devil-may-care laugh that women always go for, and scooped her up in his big burly arms. "Miss Strompbork," he said.

The last I saw of them they were hitting it off in a polka, heads close together, laughing like somebody had made a joke. On the side lines I started talking to myself. *Three sets of Little Giant Encyclopedia, fully illustrated and indexed for instant reference*—I beat my chest and played pick-up with my hair. I cussed like a wild man. Beside me the boarding missus wagged her chins and said sadly, "My oncle was readink all the time boooks before he went crazy—"

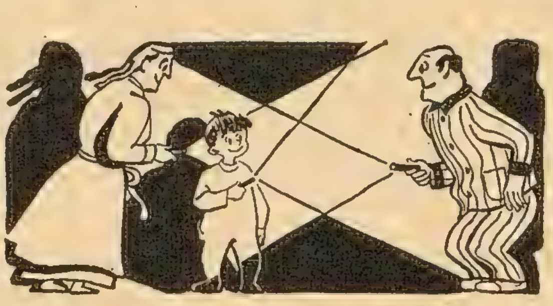
THE END

Woman-Talk

BY
MARGARET FISHBACK



PRACTICAL MEASURE: The Bright Star Battery Company of Clifton, New Jersey, has produced a practical but festive gift for youngsters, or for fathers who drive cars at night, or for mothers who are on nursery duty twenty-four hours a day and must guide Snooks to the bathroom in the wee small hours. It's a smartly styled fist-filling flashlight that comes in a flock of merry colors, easy to find in the glove compartment of a car, and an attractive addition to Momma's bureau top. It gives a bright light for long weeks of use, thanks to the unusual battery harbored in the attractive case. Another feature of special interest to mothers of small fry is its lens of unbreakable plastic. If you give one to Pa or Ma, don't forget to wrap one up for Junior. Another happy note: It will fit neatly into Christmas stockings, and the retail price in stores throughout the country is $1.15, plus 10 cents each for the batteries. (Available in hardware departments, hardware stores, radio and electrical shops, auto supply shops, and in the J. C. Penney chain stores.)

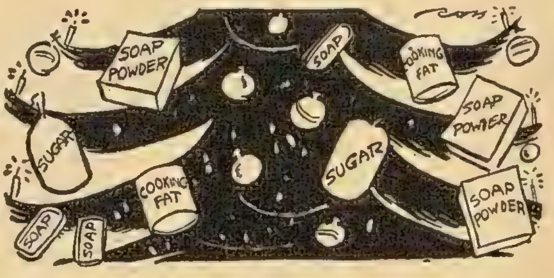


THE DANGERS OF DRINK: Dr. Foster Kennedy, director of the department of neurology at Bellevue Hospital, New York City, says Americans are showing a grave tendency to drink themselves into splitting headaches and even convulsions. *But* the drink that concerns Dr. K. is not hard liquor. Nor is it wine or beer. It's just plain, old-fashioned water. He declared that the American passion for speeding repeatedly to the water cooler and swigging innumerable glasses of water might cause edema of the brain, resulting in convulsions. Slightly more than two quarts a day is plenty for any normal, temperate individual, scolded Dr. Kennedy. Quick, a pony of brandy! I feel faint and dizzy from overdrinking at breakfast!

EASY ON THE EYE: Ten leading stores across the country (B. Altman in New York) recently presented a captivating collection of new decorator chintzes and twills which are easy on the eye and happily priced at around $2 a yard, though they look lusciously expensive. After the long wartime and postwar shortage of reasonably priced fabrics for the home, these are a distinct pleasure. Made by Everfast, they are backed by a color guaranty that promises they are friendly to sun and water. If I knew S. Claus well enough, I'd ask him to give my home a complete face-lifting with slip covers and draperies of such a charmer as the pattern called "Rhapsody," a twill strewn with large red and white tulips and bunches of violets. I'd also hope for some of the bedroom ensembles made of the new Everfast fabrics by the Sumergrade company. One of the patterns used is "Leona," a modernistic arrangement of chartreuse lilies sketched in white medallions against a background of pearl gray.

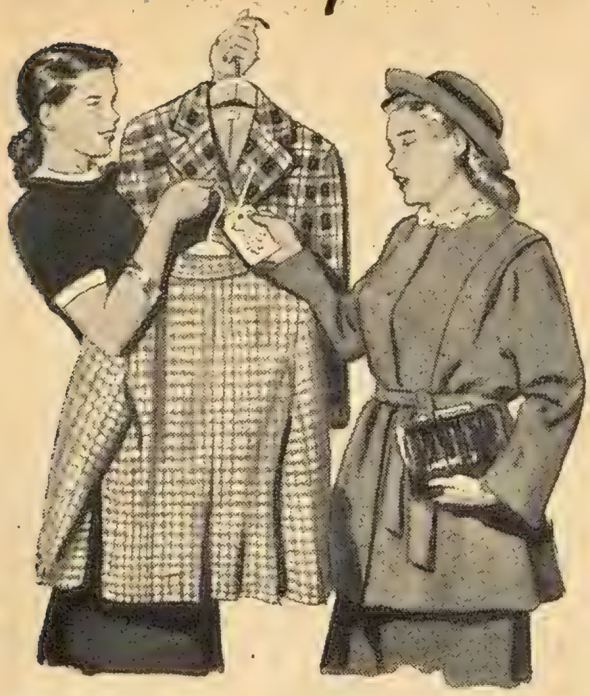
OPTIMIST

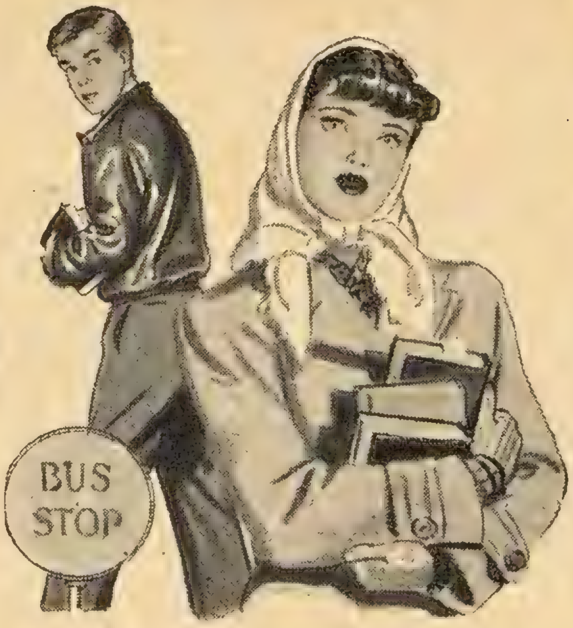
The Christmas gifts for which I hope
Most fervently are laundry soap
And sugar. . . . The necessities
Of life are now its luxuries!

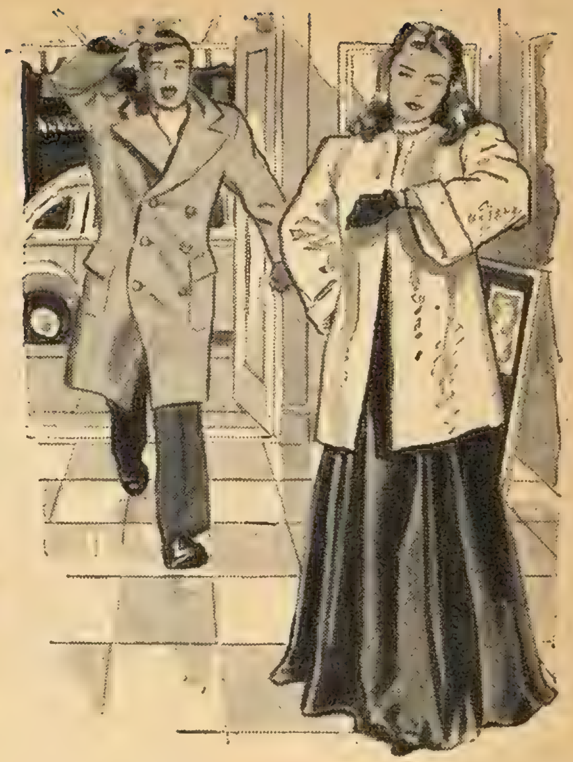


AREN'T MEN THE ONES, THOUGH?—The delivery-truck strike that paralyzed New York's grocery stores and department stores for weeks this fall spotlighted a strange prejudice in the male animal. Although the department stores managed miraculously to spirit merchandise in or around or underneath the picket lines, so that shelves did not become absolutely bare, business almost ceased in the men's wear departments, simply because men won't carry packages, and no packages were being delivered. Unless Momma went along, or did the shopping alone, and lugged Pop's new underwear or suits or shoes home *for* him, he just kept on wearing his old clothes rather than suffer the inconvenience or the indignity of carrying a bag or a box home from the store.

Are you in the know?







Which plaid should "chubby" pick?

- ☐ *A kingsize design*
- ☐ *A petite pattern*
- ☐ *Neither*

Even if you're a plumpish pigeon, *you, too,* can wear plaids. But whether jumbo or tiny patterns intrigue you—pick neither: A medium-size plaid is your best bet. And speaking of sizes, here's a thought for certain times: Only Kotex has 3 sizes, for different women, different days—Regular, Junior, Super Kotex. So you can choose the size that's best for *you.* What's more, every Kotex napkin contains a *deodorant*—to help you stay dainty.

For lip-appeal *plus*, should you—

- ☐ *Wear a sultry shade*
- ☐ *Use a lip brush*
- ☐ *Revise the shape of your mouth*

If you'd have lush-looking lips—know your pucker-paint technique. Choose a true red: on you it looks better than sultry, tiger-woman shades. And don't try to re-shape your mouth! Carefully following its contour with a lip brush can give you lip-appeal *plus*; added self-assurance. Extra poise on problem days means—Kotex. Because, for extra *protection,* Kotex has an exclusive *safety center* to keep you super-confident!

Should you agree to meet your "squire"?

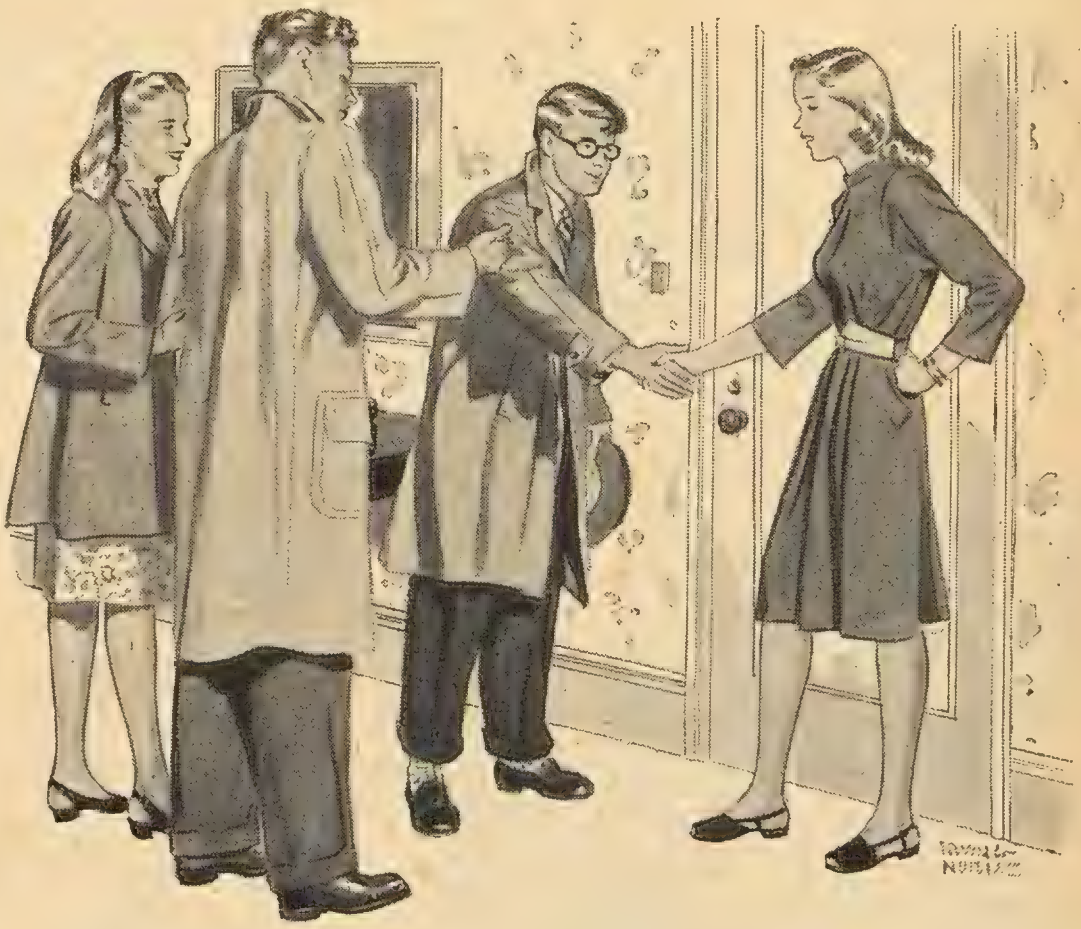
- ☐ *If it's more practical*
- ☐ *To show you're not stuffy*
- ☐ *Nay, nay, never!*

That squire's a square who doesn't call for his gal! *Unless* there's a good reason. For instance, on a theatre date—if you live miles out and he works late, it's more practical to meet. For meeting "your public" on trying days, it's practical to choose Kotex. Because the *flat tapered ends* of Kotex free you from tell-tale outline cares. You get that high octane kind of confidence with Kotex!

When a blind date's disappointing, would you—

- ☐ *Back out gracefully*
- ☐ *Make like a martyr*
- ☐ *Grin and bear it*

Your blind date's gruesome? Grin and bear it! Even stupor-man has feelings. Besides, he probably has friends . . . dream-beam material you'll get to know, in time. So stay in the picture; whether it's dancing, bowling or whatever. And on calendar days let Kotex keep you comfortable, with out-of-this-world softness that *lasts* because Kotex is made to *stay soft while you wear it.* Yes, with Kotex you can keep smiling!



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UNTIL MOONRISE

Continued from Page 15

war, ever. You will miss the cold Midwestern winters for a while, but you will settle down. You're solid. You'll hold straight on course. I never will unless I tie myself up tight, with wife, family, financing for the company, all the nonsense."

"I never guessed you figured it out like that," Jay said.

"Do you know the two days I was most frightened in my life?" Tony asked.

Jay shook his brown head.

Tony grinned. "V-E Day and the day I put on civilian clothes. . . . I'm going down to check the ship. I may take her up for a bit. Do you still plan to investigate the fishing upstream?"

"Yes. If there really are mountain trout—"

Tony finished for him: "—San Vittore will more nearly represent your beloved Iowa, except for more sunshine and absence of blizzards." He laughed and strode away.

JAY proceeded upstream slowly. Ancient trees made deep cool shade along the traces of a path. Clumps of giant tree ferns, bougainvillae and a frangipani tree in flower scented the still air. Hummingbirds clustered above the blossoms. The sound of the stream tumbling down was gay.

Jay was almost entirely happy, except for a certain anxiety regarding Tony. Tony would talk enthusiastically about a blonde one month, and have practically forgotten her name the next. Also he would never have refused a loan or paid a debt if Jay had not demanded all his pay checks as soon as he received them.

Jay thought, Tony is complex; I'm simple. That's what it comes down to. He is right that I shall never miss the war. I was afraid on dozens of missions, went through with it because it had to be done. I only wanted to get back home, buy a farm down the road from my cousins, take a graduate course in new methods of farming and, long ago, marry Sara.

It was a long time since he had thought of Sara, who had married in 1943, and was now the mother of two sons.

He stood still. He had reached the foot of a small waterfall.

Above the sound of the water came another sound; a girl's voice, singing in American accents an American song: It Might as Well Be Spring.

Jay scrambled up, arrived at a small cleared space.

A redheaded girl was seated on a smooth moss-grown rock across the pool. She was very pretty, although her hair lay wet and straight on her shoulders. She wore a crumpled yellow cotton frock, and dangled her bare feet in the water.

"Hello," she said. "You're one of Miramar's new owners. Let me see. Blond with blue eyes—Tony Duane. Brown-haired, hazel eyes, *very* tall, rather thin—Jason Nash. That's you. I am Sylvia Congreve."

"Red hair, gray eyes. I can see that from here," Jay said gravely.

"But you never heard of me. You haven't been to the Visitors Club yet. You and your partner make something new to talk about there, which is always a help. I am the daughter of the naturalist who is visiting the curator of the famous—only you never heard of them—Botanical Gardens."

"I have heard of them. I've been wanting to call on the curator. I'm going to farm scientifically." Jay hesitated about calling her Miss Congreve. She looked fourteen.

"We can't go on shouting across the water. Walk around, unless you want to swim. The undertow toward the cascade isn't bad. But if you swim your shoes will be on the wrong side. There are thorns."

ABOVE the pool the stream narrowed, and Jay forded it easily. When he penetrated the thick growth of ferns, Sylvia Congreve was putting on lipstick. A picnic basket and a fishing pole lay beside her.

She continued their conversation: "You *think* you will farm scientifically. In the end you'll plant according to the natives' advice; that is, according to the phases of the moon, the signs in the heavens, the storms in the hills. It doesn't matter. Everything grows here and nothing much grows profitably. Ever read Kipling or Maugham?"

"Yes. What's that got to do with anything? You're too young to wear lipstick."

She was very slight and delicately made, but certainly no more than fifteen. As if she had not heard, she went on arranging her mouth neatly with the aid of a huge silver compact. Then she powdered her face before she spoke. "I meant the-tropics-will-get-you-if-you-don't-watch-out kind of thing. It has its element of truth. I shall now comb my hair in your honor, since it isn't every day one meets a compatriot in the jungles of San Vittore.

"Incidentally, I shall be twenty-four years old next month, which is sufficiently adult to wear lipstick. And if you are embarrassed by your error, don't be. I like being five foot two when I stretch. I have a much better time than tall girls at dances on shipboard—there are so many short men."

Jason remained silent, as was his custom. Miss Congreve combed her hair. The dry part was red gold where the sun struck it; the wet ends auburn.

"Don't you like the tropics?" Jay asked.

"Yes and no. I should like any place where my clothes stayed in the same wardrobe for years on end,

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where my luggage grew dusty in an attic, and my books were in the same place on the same shelves."

"I'm going to stay here for years and years, forever, except for summer holidays to visit my relatives in Iowa," Jay told her.

She was easier to talk to than any girl he ever had met.

"Stay forever in the eternal sunlight, the recurring silver moonlight? Maybe you will. It's not a bad destiny for those who refrain from consoling themselves with the native liquor for the loss of civilized cities."

She was faintly apologetic. "Sorry for the weird pattern of my conversation. I don't know how to talk to young men very well. I meet more elderly naturalists."

"You talk fascinatingly," said Jason Nash, and blushed.

Sylvia Congreve stared at him. Her gray eyes were clear, like a dawn before a perfect morning. Then she laughed. She said, "We are both shy, actually. How amusing! I cover it up by talking on and on; you by saying nothing except short simple sentences."

"Once I was in love, but I never could think of anything to say to the girl, nor much to write," Jay confessed.

"Did the girl mind?"

"Perhaps. At least she married a man who was rejected for the army. Bad eyesight," Jason explained.

"Do you miss the girl still? I never was in love."

Absurdly pleased by that last succinct statement, Jason said, "I haven't thought of her more than once or twice in years. I don't quite remember what she looked like."

Sylvia made another abrupt change of subject.

"I was in a bad mood when I took this walk, because father just told me he has made up his mind to go on to South America after he is finished here. I had hoped for a summer in the States. Sometimes father lectures at home in university towns. They *are* nice, with their air of permanence. . . ."

Her voice trailed off, and she said slowly, "I seem to be a naturalist in spite of myself since mother died. I became father's general assistant and secretary then, as she had been. Sometimes it entertains me, but sometimes I think I have no more genuine flair for collating specimens and systematizing father's notes than for ballet dancing."

Something in what she had said dismayed Jay. Then he asked, "You aren't leaving San Vittore for South America soon?"

"Not for a month at least."

A month was a long time. He said, "Tony and I will give a housewarming. You'll like Tony. He dances beautifully."

THE shadow of Mount Piton stretched down across the valley as they walked home together.

Sylvia had promised to help with the decoration of Miramar. She had

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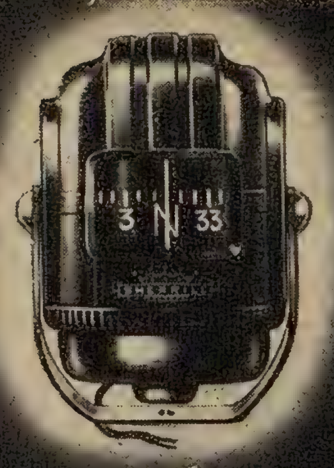

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invited Jay and Tony to join her father and herself for dinner before the dance at the Visitors Club the next evening.

At an old footbridge some distance above Miramar, Sylvia stood still. "There is a short cut to town across here," she said, and held out her hand. "We shall see you and Mr. Duane tomorrow at seven."

Jay was inspired. "Come flying with me tomorrow morning? Unless you are very busy."

She said that she was not busy. They arranged a time.

"WHERE were you? How was the fishing?" Tony inquired.

"I didn't fish. I met an American girl," Jay said.

Tony sat up. "Will I like her? When am I going to meet her?"

There was nothing unusual in this. It had been understood between them always that Jay was not much interested in the girls one met.

But Jay's heart seemed to pause, and start again painfully.

"I expect you will like her," he said rather slowly.

FROM the moment, early the next morning, when Jay told Tony, "I'll fly over to town to meet Miss Congreve if you have nothing scheduled for the ship," things developed as he had anticipated.

Tony simply announced cheerfully, "I'll go along with you."

They took off in the calm air. The town of San Vittore, a dozen miles distant by the curving coast road, was a three-minute hop.

But this morning Tony climbed. "What a morning!" he said. "Let's take Miss Congreve to see the undersea coral formations beyond Mount Piton."

"All right."

Tony began a fervent lament semiseriously: "That I should come to piloting a jaloppy which cruises at no more than one twenty an hour! I know everything you could say, Jay, so don't." He quoted, "All things are relative. I can take passengers to Trinidad in two hours in this prewar number, which seems high-speed traveling to these people, because Trinidad is an overnight journey by boat—"

"Are you going to climb all day or are we going to San Vittore?" Jay asked amiably.

"Have to climb all day in effect to get any real altitude in this baby. I know all the answers to that, too. What do I want altitude for? No enemy fighters to watch for above, no bomber formations below, no flak, no nothing. Why do I want a powerful radio? On this little set I can call in for landing directions on the rare days I land at one of the few equipped fields still maintained in the Caribbean. This is for safe-and-sane flying in sunny weather. We're not going on any momentous night missions.

"When this clunker dependably pays its way, we can get another not much better, and another after that. Ever figure, Jay, that by the time we have an actual air line, with regularly scheduled flights, we may be too old to fly anything hotter than a puddle jumper like this?"

Jay laughed. "You'll be sighing for machine guns in front of you and something to shoot at next."

"Sometimes I do. You know it."

"Like hell you do, Tony. You don't want back the fatigue, the tension, the uncertainty of being alive a week from Wednesday."

Tony cut and began to glide down in a lazy spiral. After a moment he said, "One forgets a great deal. Yet sometimes I'd like back the feeling of living with every bit of myself. . . . Never mind me, Jay, I'm just sounding off."

He landed, taxied to the dock.

"The Botanical Gardens are at least ten minutes' walk, uphill. We'll perspire through our fine clean linens en route," Jay said ruefully.

But Trevor Russell, who had sold them Miramar, hailed them from his car as they finished tying the ship.

Russell was middle-aged, sturdy, and resembled exactly any one of hundreds of pictures of typical British squires. He owned the best-kept house in San Vittore and the only fast motor launch in the harbor.

Driving Tony and Jay toward the Botanical Gardens, Trevor said, "The old Resident imported every tropic tree and shrub that will grow in our wonderful climate. The great American naturalist, Dr. Congreve, thinks he has done splendidly."

Sylvia Congreve, her father, Dr. Ventura, the curator, and his wife were in the walled "English garden" to the rear of the curator's house. Even while observing that Sylvia was at least twice as lovely as his memory of her, Jay noticed that Dr. Ventura was a frail, courtly little man. Mrs. Ventura's blue eyes were sparkling under her white hair.

Dr. Congreve addressed Jay enthusiastically: "My daughter tells me you mean to farm scientifically. That's wonderful. The potentialities for intensive farming in this rich soil are unlimited."

Dr. Ventura suggested to Jay, "Let me show you a few possibilities. Of course, I've only been able to experiment in a small way."

JAY, accompanying him and Dr. Congreve, heard Mrs. Ventura excuse herself on the plea of household duties. At any other time he would have been genuinely interested in Dr. Ventura's experiments with crop diversification and in Dr. Congreve's comments.

But he was distracted by remembering Sylvia in a green print frock, green sandals strapped about her narrow ankles, her red hair glorious, and Tony's blue eyes regarding her.

Dr. Congreve discoursed for much more than five minutes apropos of Dr. Ventura's truck-gardening experiments.

(*Continued on page 66*)

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(*Continued from page 64*)

"It's just superstition to believe that the high-vitamin vegetables of the temperate zone won't grow in the tropics. Dr. Ventura has been getting ten crops of peas a year."

"Amazing," Jay murmured. Tony would no doubt suggest to Sylvia that the coral gardens were more beautiful while the shadow of Mount Piton lay upon them than later in the morning. That was true.

Dr. Ventura showed him with pride a small planting of Golden Bantam corn. Dr. Congreve switched to the ease with which United States cities could be supplied with fresh vegetables from the West Indies by refrigerated plane.

"We must have a quick look at my English strawberries," Dr. Ventura mentioned. They proceeded from the strawberries to the espaliered peaches. Dr. Ventura suggested hesitantly, "The soil at Miramar has rested so long it will be ideal. If you would be interested in having me help you—"

Jay thanked him sincerely, and saw the plane take off from the harbor. He spent the rest of the morning concentrating on tropic agriculture. When they got back to the house, Mrs. Ventura urged Jay to stay to luncheon.

Sylvia and Tony returned just in time for luncheon. "Flying in a small plane is wonderful, father," she began. "One sees so much more. Mr. Duane let me hold the controls."

"Not Mr. Duane—Tony," Tony corrected easily.

Sylvia was pink-cheeked with excitement. She informed them, "*He* is going to teach me to fly."

Tony's glance, meeting Jay's, was faintly embarrassed. Tony knew as well as Jay that their plane was extremely tricky to fly. Safe in the hands of experts like themselves, it required much too precise handling to be suitable for the training of a novice.

Tony shifted the subject smoothly. With a sort of wry detachment, Jay observed Tony's "operation" through the rest of the luncheon. He had watched the technique before, amusedly or indifferently. Every word Tony said was addressed to Sylvia, yet that would not have seemed obvious to anyone who did not know him well.

Sylvia was regarding Tony as if he were the most remarkable person she had ever met.

He is remarkable, Jay told himself, also my closest friend. I'm signing off something I never signed on with her. It's not her fault nor Tony's."

But when he and Tony were flying back to Miramar, Jay was still not able to be natural.

"WHAT a lovely girl!" Tony said enthusiastically. "She's had an odd life but fascinating."

"Yes." Jay made a protest: "You can't teach her to fly in this ship."

"If you can fly one of them, you can fly all of them," Tony quoted a pilot's cliché.

"You know as well as I that applies to experienced pilots," Jay insisted. "And our ship, particularly with floats on it, has to be taken off and landed most precisely if we don't want to turn it over in thirty fathoms of tropic ocean."

Tony looked genuinely puzzled. "Why on earth the lecture? I'm not planning to make Sylvia an ace of the air in ten easy lessons."

His general resentment of the situation kept Jay from answering directly. "The plane is supposed to pay for its keep," he reminded Tony. "If you have a crack-up you can't ferry Trevor Russell from hither to yon. His trips do buy a lot of gas."

"Straight is the line of duty," Tony quoted flippantly, "also somewhat monotonous."

THAT night, in intervals of dancing with the few English girls, and once with Sylvia, Jay was seized upon by Drs. Ventura and Congreve. They continued their joint lecture on the wonderful possibilities of tropic agriculture.

When Jay danced with Sylvia, she smiled at him exactly as if he were her brother. "Tony is just as wonderful as you said," she told him.

"You and he dance beautifully together," Jay said. It was the truth.

IN the cool early mornings before the trade winds died, Sylvia had often walked alone from the town to the point where the land narrowed. On one side surf pounded in in long slow breakers from open sea. On the other, in the shelter of a cove, the water was calm.

Now, morning after morning, Tony anchored his plane in the cove and met Sylvia there. Sometimes they sat on the sand in the shade of the fort's lichen-covered walls and talked of nothing and of everything. Sometimes they gathered wild jasmine and Tony twined wreaths like Hawaiian *lei* for Sylvia.

Occasionally he took her for short flights. Tony knew that Jay's protests against using this type of ship to teach a novice were sound, and he gave Sylvia no lessons beyond letting her hold the controls once or twice for a few moments. He seldom mentioned these morning meetings to Jay. Sylvia never spoke of them to her father or the Venturas. Their reasons for silence were different.

Jay was so busy with plantings at Miramar that he left the house at dawn, took lunch with him, and returned only at dinnertime. He seemed tired, and was noticeably silent.

Once Tony protested, "There's no law obliging you to plant *all* our long fallow land in any given time, you know."

"It interests me to see how much can be done with the labor available," Jay said.

"You're rather obviously not interested in my progress, if any, with

Sylvia Congreve. At least you never inquire."

Jay shrugged. "You'll tell me what you want when you want, Tony."

The curtness of that answer was so out of character that Tony stared. Jay went on eating his dinner.

The idea slid across Tony's mind then that Jay sounded as if he resented Tony's absorption of Sylvia. But almost instantly Tony dismissed that as fantastic. Jay never had taken sudden fancies to girls.

Tony sincerely hoped Jay would meet a girl some day who would replace his lost Sara in his affections. He reminded himself that Jay had always been somewhat single-tracked, and mentioned Sylvia no more.

Sylvia did not tell her father that she met Tony daily, because Dr. Congreve, very shortly after he had met Jay and Tony, had made a comparison between them derogatory to Tony.

He had said, "That's an odd friendship. Nash is so obviously substantial, logical, and thorough in whatever he plans. Duane seems to me an extremely superficial chap by comparison."

Dr. Ventura expressed agreement in his mild way. Sylvia just caught herself from protest in time.

Protest would have been too revelatory.

She had liked Jay, she had thought him extremely pleasant, and still did. But Tony seemed to her vivid, exciting. He was the handsomest young man she ever had known.

If Tony and Sylvia both had deeper reasons than these for silence about their meetings, they scarcely knew it as the sunlit days went slowly by. These early mornings, this strip of land between sea and harbor, the crescent bay where the plane rocked gently at anchor, the old fort, the wood where the jasmine flowered, the beach where the quartz pebbles glistened bright as diamonds—all became "theirs," not to be shared with others, even in conversation.

TONY told stories of Cairo, of Taormina, of the Alps, in the tone of one speaking of things long ago, far off, inconsequential.

And Sylvia asked, "Will you miss the hundred cities you've been? Will you be content with sameness, with simplicity, in a little island on one of the fringes of the world?"

Tony said, "I am content with you. I am peaceful with you. I never knew a girl so peaceful." He took her hand.

She said, half wanting to postpone the moment and half eager for it, "Among the dozens, the scores, the hundreds of girls you've known?"

"I have forgotten if there were others," Tony said.

When he kissed her, she touched his thick yellow hair with gentle fingers, forgetting she had ever asked the question.

There was no hurry about love either. This magic, too, was theirs alone.

There was no hurry that day or the next, nor until the morning when, though Tony was not late, Sylvia had been waiting an hour.

Her father's plans had changed abruptly, as she was accustomed to having them change. Dr. Congreve had an opportunity to join an advance party in Trinidad for the South American expedition, to fly on with them from there. He planned to leave within forty-eight hours via an interisland freighter. To Sylvia it spelled catastrophe.

It did not spell catastrophe to Tony.

He gave swift thought to various not clearly connected facts. If Sylvia left for South America with her father she would be gone months, which might as well be forever.

A pilot acquaintance of his in Puerto Rico had lately sent for his girl from the States and married her there. Tony tried to remember such details as he'd heard at the Officers' Club as to the ease with which persons with American passports could be married on an American island.

His plane was not in absolutely Grade A condition. The engine was slightly "rough." He had been intending to have a first-rate mechanic inspect it next time he happened to be at a decently equipped air base. Oh, the ship was safe enough to operate. Probably the motor's roughness could be put under the heading of general decrepitude. The old slow clunker would no doubt keep right on flying along.

A night flight under the stars with Sylvia would be glorious. They could stop twice to refuel. There were also many islands en route, in case—

He did not bother to finish that in his mind. His arm round Sylvia's shoulder tightened. "Stop looking worried, dearest. You are not going to South America with your father, up the Amazon or down the Orinoco or wherever. I've added several ill-assorted facts in my mind. The sum is wonderful."

She looked at him puzzled. Then she smiled that lovely slow smile of hers which was so trusting.

"We're flying to Puerto Rico tonight," he said. "We'll be married there."

Sylvia protested, faintly. She said that her father could not manage without her. Tony answered that he would have to learn. Sylvia said that she had always—sort of—planned on being married with a "real" wedding, meaning in a church, with a white satin frock.

Tony added that, since he knew several people at the Puerto Rico base, they would manage some sort of "real" wedding.

Sylvia did not want to lose the warmth, the excitement, the gaiety he had brought to her life. She did not want to lose Tony.

Her protests ended.

They settled details as he flew her to San Vittore. She agreed to meet him at the dock at ten in the evening.

"The moon rises around eleven," Tony remembered. "You've never flown by moonlight. It's beautiful."

AT some hour in the long afternoon, when Tony was done with his few preparations, he decided that his conscience might as well be labeled "Jason Nash." That conscience was troubling him.

Jay would insist that a long over-

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water flight with a passenger in an area where there were no shore radio stations to call in case of trouble was not safe, not justified by the circumstances either.

Jay would say that if he felt he could get away with breaking the rules, it was his own business, but involving anyone else was outrageous.

Tony stifled his conscience. If he didn't elope with Sylvia he would lose her. He was not going to lose her!

Fortunately, Jay had accepted a dinner invitation from the Venturas for that evening. It saved Tony an hour he would have hated, dining opposite Jay, making conversation, and concealing his plan.

Russell called for Jay, and drove him to town.

TONY reached the dock before ten o'clock, and waited for Sylvia with emotions oddly similar to those in the moment before take-off on dangerous missions long ago. Then her light footsteps coming down the long pier made the most exciting sound he ever heard.

The stars were very bright as they flew north. Tony always had loved night flying over water; yet this evening the sense of freedom, of peace, did not arrive as they left San Vittore behind. Tony stayed tense. Probably because I never was on my way to matrimony before, he told himself.

"The stars seem so near." Sylvia's voice was very soft. "It is as wonderful as you said, Tony."

"We shall be completely happy," Tony promised her.

They were just forty miles from the north coast of San Vittore when the motor quit.

The tail wind, for which Tony had been grateful, roughened the water. He landed skillfully. But he knew that, in landing, one float had been damaged, because the plane rode the choppy water at an angle. Not dangerous—just noticeable.

"What happens now?" Sylvia asked, in a voice too carefully light.

Tony did not answer immediately. He was calling on his radio automatically and, he knew, rather senselessly; but he might as well send through while he had power left to send. There was no shore station within range. It was improbable any ship could pick up his signals.

He told Sylvia, "There are bound to be all sorts of fishing boats around. As soon as the moon rises we'll see them and they'll see us. We'll get a tow."

"How soon is moonrise?" she asked reasonably.

"Not much more than an hour distant."

"*That's* not long."

"No, sweet."

Tony saw no possibility that they could stay afloat for an hour.

The conclusion of this story will appear next week.

VETERANS' Bulletin Board

BY MATT URBAN

MISSION COMPLETED is the report as the Bulletin Board is posted for the last time. It was with great pride that this department tried for more than a year to be of service to veterans, their families and their friends. Your response—your letters full of facts, tips, comments, gripes—has shown that you've found it worth while.

On leaving, let's remember and once more remind others that all of us still owe and will keep on owing veterans just consideration. *Just,* in the light of the fact that there are nearly 18,000,000 of them, ranging from the few loud-mouthed, publicized bums to the ones who want nothing and the many who need help. Don't be misled by the few rotten ones. Some people—a minority, but increasing in number—are assuming that those few are typical. Take for instance Dickson Hartwell's recent article in Liberty, entitled Are the Veterans Chiseling? Our mail, though expressing some resentment, did also include such things as "Bravo!" and "You're right, you're right, veterans *are* chiselers!" The fact is that chiselers are no more numerous among veterans than among other civilians.

Veterans are civilians and must be accepted as such. The only difference between them and their nonveteran friends is that many of them have been forced to make sacrifices and will keep on needing help to get back what they had to give up. If we all bear that in mind and act accordingly, we are bound to end up with one great big happy family of civilians.

Need Any Further Help?

There are a hundred and one places where you can get top service in veteran affairs. All you have to do is go or write to the right place in the right way.

The Veterans Administration with branch offices throughout the country is just waiting to give you A-1 service in schooling, insurance, medical care, loans, vocational training, apprentice and on-the-job training, pension payment.

Service Centers located throughout the larger cities can be counted on for almost anything. If they can't serve you directly, they will tell you exactly where to go and many times will help you get there. Personal and neighborly advice are their feature offerings.

The U. S. Employment Service with its Veteran Employment Service does wonders in employment problems.

If you're out for legal, political and personal assistance, especially in emergencies, don't hesitate to apply for aid from the more established veterans' organizations such as the Disabled American Veterans, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion, or the Amvets.

The Adjutant General's Office, Washington 25, D. C., with its many subdivisions, does a top all-around job in offering army recordings on such things as awards and decorations, regulations, retirement. Working hand in hand with the AGO is the Army Central Adjustment Office, 4300 Goodfellow Boulevard, St. Louis, Missouri. Here they have a Demobilized Personnel Records Branch, the War Bond Branch, and others that can straighten you out on mustering-out pay, back payments, bonds, service records, etc.

The Navy, not to be outdone, gives you efficient and prompt service with its Bureau of Naval Personnel, Navy Department, Washington, D. C.

The Army Air Force Headquarters, Washington, D. C., is right on the beam as to taking care of its flying brothers and their families.

A civilian

The former fighting marines can always count on the Commandant Marine Corps, Washington, D. C., office to come through for them.

The Office of Dependency Benefits, 213 Washington Street, Newark, N. J., is digging up past-due allotment cases and paying off sums never expected. It's at your service.

The Red Cross, with an enviable record of taking over power of attorney and representing the veteran, is also at your service. So are many federal, state, and local agencies, plus such groups as the Y.M.C.A., the Y.W.C.A., Travelers Aid, USO, Chamber of Commerce, business men's groups, various unions and religious organizations.

Good pickings and good luck, fellow civilians!

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IN THE HOLE OF THE DOUGHNUT

Continued from Page 27

ure, the rumor that the Germans had surrounded Bastogne grew and grew, but no one knew—or no one told—the truth.

I conferred with Major Fitz on the feasibility of living off the land. "Feasibility" is a naïve word—we had no other choice. The only reason for hesitation was that in the previous months the Army had drilled into us the rule that we were not to take food from the countryside; that we must live on the issued rations. Now, in the face of empty G.I. stomachs, we tossed months of indoctrination to the winds. Needless to say, we ate—and fairly well.

The job of chief food procurer was turned over to our battalion supply sergeant. He drove up to the kitchen daily, his trailer loaded with a freshly killed cow or pigs.

FRIDAY, December 22, two German officers advanced toward our lines under the immunity of a white flag. Their offer: "Surrender or be annihilated in two hours."

General McAuliffe had his answer ready: "Nuts!"

Colonel Harper, one of the division's regimental commanders, gave the general's answer to the waiting Germans. "But I do not understand 'Nuts,'" protested one. Colonel Harper explained sharply: "It means go to hell!"

THAT same afternoon we requested permission to leave our soggy woods and move to a near-by village called Hemroulle. Permission was granted, and we settled down in comfortable houses. Other units of the division were fighting viciously; our turn was yet to come. For the moment, at least, we were out of the weather, into the natives' food supply, and we had only minor inconveniences. So we sat around—surrounded, presumably—drinking coffee and talking about the United States and women, not necessarily in that order.

The house in which we did our talking and living had been deserted by its owners. Major Fitzgerald reasoned that if they left in a hurry, they must have left certain valuables behind, particularly food. His scout training paid off when he uncovered two cured hams cached under a pile of bed linen. "Christmas Day," he announced proudly, "we eat."

The ham was no sooner on the stove on Christmas Eve than we were ordered to move two miles north to the village of Champs, to assist a unit being attacked by a strong Nazi force. Champs was undergoing a heavy artillery treatment when I arrived there, and the Germans had been able to get a few of their numbers into the village itself.

I asked a rifleman lying beside a knocked-out truck how he felt about this penetration.

"Well, sir," he answered very calmly, "they're in our town all right. But they're going to have a hell of a time getting back out."

This simple estimate summed up our operational activities for Christmas morning. Our soldiers went from house to house and coldly killed every one of them.

With this attack under control we sat in the company command post congratulating ourselves. Suddenly an officer rushed in and shouted, "There are four German tanks and about a hundred and fifty men in back of us!"

He was more than right. Less than 200 yards away from our troops were *six* tanks, each one carrying the Maltese cross on its turret, and about 150 German infantrymen milling around the vehicles. The group was centered around a lone farmhouse on a ridge. Our troops had withdrawn to a small woods opposite the farmhouse. We were separated from the Germans by a broad open field.

MAJOR FITZ, meanwhile, had remained at the command post at Hemroulle, and I called him by radio. No answer. Someone volunteered the information that the Germans had attacked Hemroulle. Fitz had not more than a dozen men with him. This, then, was our Christmas present: Germans 200 yards away, our command post missing.

In the midst of this confusion Sergeant Gonzales, an observer from our mortar platoon, came up to me, walkie-talkie radio in hand. "Do you want the mortars to fire into that mob?" he asked, pointing toward the Germans.

"Fire?" I answered. "Are you in position?"

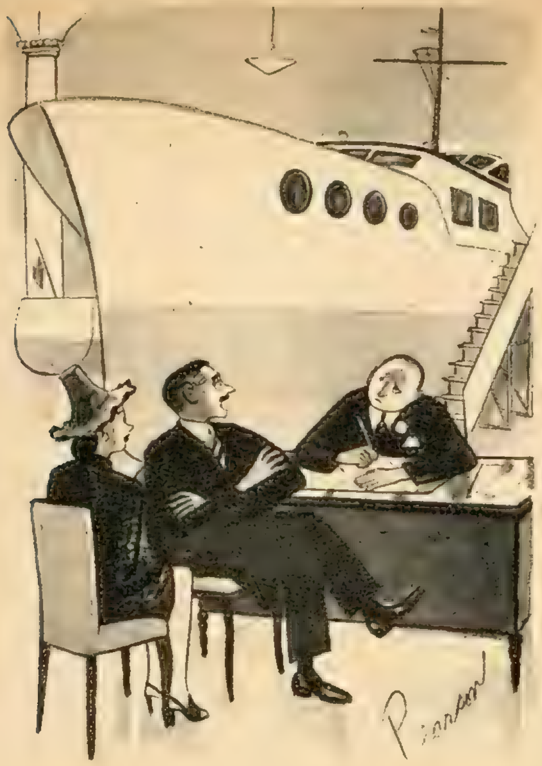
"Yes, we moved back of the woods and set up our guns as soon as the Germans came," he said. "I've already given the guns the range."

"Fire," I said.

Sergeant Gonzales pushed the hand button on his radio and said one word: "Fire."

I heard the *plop* of four mortar shells leaving the gun barrels. Three seconds, four seconds, five seconds, six seconds. . . . *Whap!* Four—listen to 'em—four 81-mm. mortar shells, each weighing one pound and capable of scattering knife-edged particles of steel for a radius of 100 feet, landed dead center among the 150 Germans and their tanks.

Those four shells completely disorganized the Nazis, and our men poured out from the woods to catch them at the peak of the confusion. Then followed twenty minutes of that close-in, hit-to-kill kind of fighting usually seen in a Hollywood version of battle—but this was real. The score at the end of twenty minutes: five German tanks knocked out; the sixth made a run for home through our lines, was nailed before it could close the gate; enemy dead,



"Don't bother delivering it. We'll live in it right here."

LIBERTY

67; enemy captured (practically all wounded), 35. Our casualties: three men slightly wounded.

The fighting had no sooner ended than up the road came Major Fitz and his dozen men. They had carried on a very successful private war of their own at the command post. Fitz's force score: 10 Germans killed, 1 tank knocked out.

Fitz grinned as he told of the fight, but it was not the battle that pleased him. He took his field bag off his shoulder, opened it up and said militarily, "Sir, for your inspection."

Inside was the ham, a bit muddy but cooked and ready to eat. We had, as Fitz promised, ham for Christmas dinner.

Later that day the regimental commander visited us. He talked over the day's activities, then called me outside to his jeep. Taking his map from the rear seat, he said, "Look here." Without further explanation he pointed to the map symbol representing Bastogne, then with his finger traced a circle around the outskirts of the town. His look asked if I understood. I nodded that I did. Now, after three days, we were officially surrounded.

That night we received a beautifully colored overlay showing the Germans' positions, indicated in red, ringing Bastogne. In the center of the circle, written in green, were the words "Merry Christmas." Major Fitz was the only one to sense the historical impact of the overlay and the accompanying recap of General McAuliffe's dealings with the German surrender demand, and he took both papers for souvenirs.

During the holiday period—Christmas to New Year's—we had no action in the fighting department.

Our food problem had been solved on Saturday, December 23, when hundreds of transport airplanes dropped parachute loads of food and ammunition. Parachutists have a particular distaste for these transport planes because of their normal association with them—jumping. They call them "sweatboxes." When they dropped the food, however, the men actually cheered, and for once said something kind about the "truck drivers" who flew them. We also felt kindly toward the friendly armored units which pierced the German ring from the south to bring us relief on Tuesday, December 26. So, with food and friends within our circle, we approached the New Year in a celebrating mood.

Major Fitz decided we must have a chicken dinner on New Year's Eve. He found a house in the village with a dining room and kitchen intact, and installed himself as chief cook. At seven o'clock on New Year's Eve the battalion staff—seven of us—filed into Fitz's dining room to find a banquet board awaiting us. White tablecloth, fine glassware, shining silver, *and* a glass of red wine beside each plate. Fitz brought in the fried chicken—then it happened. *Wham!* An artillery shell sledge-hammered the roof of the house. Another landed a few yards away. Miraculously, none of the fragments entered the dining room. Fitz looked up at the buckling ceiling and said, without an attempt at humor, "I'm going to eat this chicken if it kills me."

Harassing artillery fire fell in our vicinity during the entire meal. We sat, I can't say "quietly," and finished our dinner. But as Fitz said afterward, "I've been in night clubs on New Year's Eve where they made more noise and the food wasn't half as good."

Several days later we left our defensive position to lash out in an attack which, for us, was far more costly and gruelling than the defensive phase of Bastogne. That, however, is for the history books.

T*HERE is no irreverence intended in any of the above. Bastogne, more than any single battle of the war, was won by the ingenuity and courage of each individual soldier. But all soldiers know that the law of averages is a corollary to the process of elimination. Either you do or you don't, and there's not a hell of a lot you can do about an artillery shell that explodes three feet from you. So when a laugh comes along you hold onto it while waiting.*

That's why we got such a kick out of the War Department's movie called The Defenders of Bastogne. This documentary gets quite gushy about the battle, and the narrator winds it up by saying, "If you see any of these 'boys' [the quotation marks are mine] at the bar, buy 'em a beer. They deserve it."

Of course we never turned down a free beer, and there were lots of offers; but we always glanced around to see who was watching. You see, many other outfits had it a lot tougher—without the headlines.

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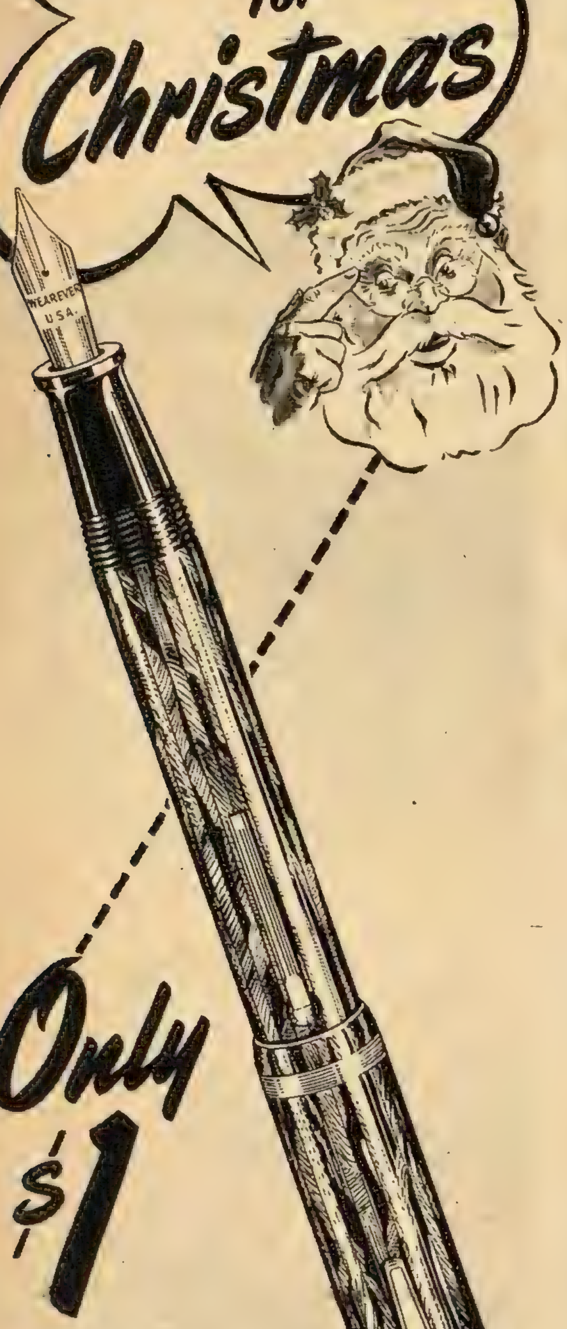

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Pick of THE PICTURES

BY
VIRGINIA SPIES

Song of the Sout

Disney's movie, based on the Uncle Remus stories, features wonderful kids, catchy songs, and ingenious additions to his cartoon menagerie.

HERE'S where Walt Disney's animal kingdom acquires a Southern drawl and plays second fiddle, for the first time, to real-life actors.

Song of the South is a merry Technicolored re-creation of Joel Chandler Harris' Uncle Remus stories—the fables about Br'er Rabbit which a wise old darky draws upon to teach an unhappy little white boy about life. Disney tries something new by letting flesh-and-blood performers carry the bulk of his film, but cartoons are used for Uncle Remus' animated tales. It adds up to gay, colorful entertainment for kids of all ages.

Though it's hard to steal scenes from Disney's pen-and-ink menagerie, two appealing youngsters, Bobby Driscoll, nine, and Luana Patten, seven, give remarkably sweet performances as plantation playmates. James Baskett, as Uncle Remus, is a mellow corn-and-molasses Aesop. And there are some wonderful new animated characters—Br'ers Rabbit, Fox, Bear, Frog, etc.—who cavort through cartoon wonderlands to the tune of some of the bounciest songs of the year.

OTHER PICTURES WORTH SEEING

HUMORESQUE (Warner Bros.). A polished and provocative movie which features fine acting by Joan Crawford, John Garfield, and Oscar Levant.

MARGIE (20th Century-Fox). A sweet, refreshing comedy of young love set in the era of flappers, coonskin coats, and the Charleston.

DECEPTION (Warner Bros.). Bette Davis and Claude Rains vie for acting honors in an engrossing backstage drama of musical artists.

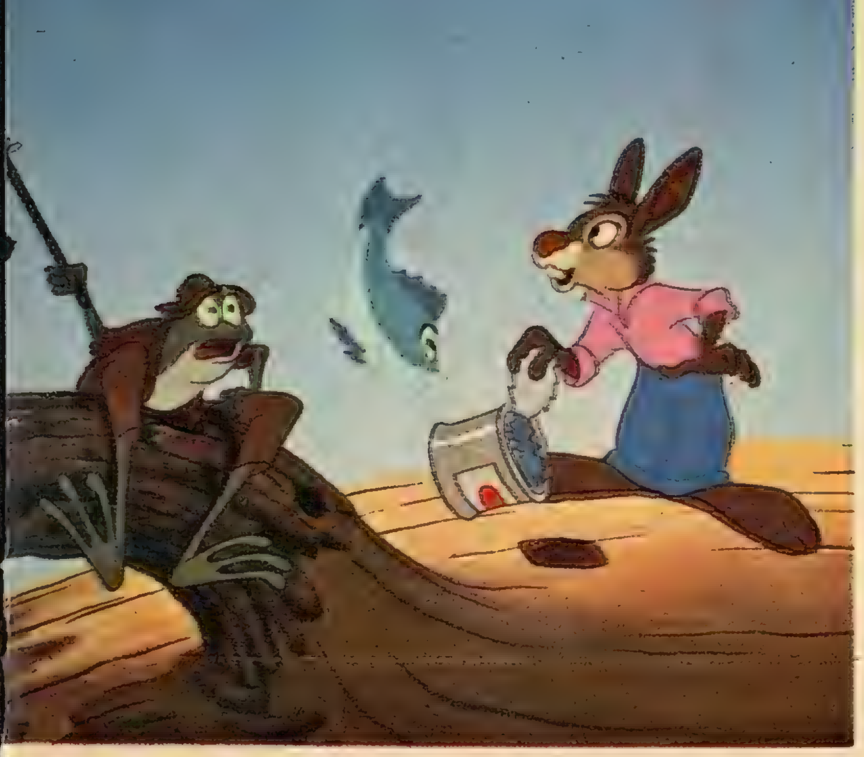
THE DARK MIRROR (International). This is an absorbing, supercharged thriller with Olivia De Havilland excelling at playing twins.

TWO YEARS BEFORE THE MAST (Paramount). Alan Ladd and Brian Donlevy are part of the crew in this tough and tangy version of a great sea classic.

THE JOLSON STORY (Columbia). A schmaltzy, spirited and unforgettable tribute to one of our greatest entertainers, with Larry Parks playing Jolson.

BLUE SKIES (Paramount). A top-notch musical, with Bing Crosby, Fred Astaire, and Joan Caulfield doing justice to twenty-eight tunes by Irving Berlin.

Above: An animated bluebird comes calling on former cover girl Luana Patten, 7, and film veteran Bobby Driscoll, 9, who are plantation playmates. Bobby learns about life from lovable Uncle Remus (right), portrayed by James Baskett. Though flesh-and-blood actors carry the bulk of the picture, Uncle Remus' whimsical fables are illustrated by cartoon sequences such as the one below with Br'ers Frog and Rabbit.



SMILING CORNER

Continued from Page 31

but she was not quite sure how it would be received and kept silent. She had never seen the house before, although she had heard a great deal about it. It was called Smiling Corner. Vivien felt a thrill as she looked around. Every stick and stone there, every curtain and cushion had been specially designed to go with her. Clinton had refused to let her see the place until it was finished to the last detail. Everything had to be perfect for her. Nothing short of that would do. Such care and solicitude were sweet indeed. But she had thought occasionally that it would have been nice if she had had some say in choosing the curtains, for instance, or even the color of the paint.

Vivien was tired after the drive and would have liked to go straight up to her room. Or would it be his room? She was not quite sure what the arrangements were in that respect, though no doubt they would have been most carefully thought out. Anyway it was quite clear when she suggested going to her room that Clinton had other plans. There was to be a conducted tour of the garden first, and the house second.

Anyway they proceeded to do the garden and the terraces, and Vivien began to run out of suitable exclamations of delight. Everything was so planned, so perfect. This veranda was where she would breakfast on a fine day. This sheltered nook where she would sun-bathe. Vivien, in spite of the beauty of it all, began to have misgivings. Supposing, she thought, I'd like to have breakfast in the sheltered nook and sun-bathe on the veranda! How was that going to be received? And her confidence was in no way repaired when Clinton spoke very sharply to the gardener for planting the new *Daphne mezereum* four inches from where Clinton wanted it to be. Oh dear, she thought, is there anywhere I could sow a few nasturtiums of my own?

She was feeling tired and depressed when they had finished with the garden and entered the house. Inside there were some letters laid out on a polished table in the hall, and Vivien felt a sharp pang when she saw them. They were all for Clinton, of course. No one knew her address as yet, not even Andrew.

Clinton, with a suitable word of apology, paused to look at his letters. Vivien found herself staring at a small packet, about six inches long, done up in brown paper. It was addressed to Mrs. Andrew Munro, c/o Clinton Marr, Esq., Smiling Corner, Sanding.

"Clinton!" she said sharply. "There's a parcel here addressed to me!"

"Is there, my love?"

"Yes, there is!" Vivien went on. "And it's very peculiar because nobody knows my address."

Clinton picked up the parcel and read the address.

"It certainly is addressed to you, my love," he admitted.

"Well, then?" Vivien stared at him.

"You must have given someone your address," Clinton said.

"But I tell you I didn't. I am absolutely positive that I didn't."

"It's nothing to get upset about, my love. People are going to know your address and are going to write to you here. This is your home now."

"I dare say it is," said Vivien peevishly, "but how can anyone send me a parcel when they don't know where I am?"

Clinton could not answer that. He was aggrieved at this silly packet upsetting his carefully arranged plans, and he went on rather more patiently than he felt.

"Perhaps you will feel better about it, my love, if you open it and see what is inside. There will probably be a note or something."

VIVIEN did as he suggested. Inside was a pound packet of tea. And no explanation whatsoever.

"There!" said Clinton soothingly. "It's only a pound of tea."

"Only a pound of tea!" Vivien glared at him. "Clinton, don't you realize what this means?"

"Frankly, no, my love. But it does seem to me that we're wasting a lot of time over a matter of no importance."

"No importance!" Vivien nearly choked. "Can't you see that Andrew knows? That *he* sent me this!"

"My love, please calm yourself. You've no evidence at all."

"Damn the evidence!" Vivien retorted. "It's a pound of cheap Indian tea. Isn't that enough? Oh—oh, it's too monstrous!"

Clinton was looking very weary indeed. Vivien did not love him at that moment—or anybody else; but she saw that it was necessary to explain the situation in words of one syllable.

"Listen, Clinton!" she said quietly, sitting down. "Three months ago we had a dinner party, Andrew and I. At the dinner party we were discussing a certain woman who had left her husband. Andrew was asked his opinion. He said this—and these are his exact, precise words—'Personally I should have been glad to give her away with a pound of tea.' "

"That was purely coincidental, my love."

"Coincidental!"

"Yes. Besides, you don't know that it is a pound."

Vivien gave him a look that would have withered a cornfield.

"Clinton, you must be careful," she said icily. "I have stood in queues for tea. For pounds of tea! And half pounds!! And even ounces!!! And this is definitely a pound! A pound of tea! I leave Andrew, and someone sends me a pound of tea! Cheap nasty Indian tea at that!"

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Clinton distastefully made a further effort.

"My love, you're jumping to conclusions. Andrew, with all his faults, would never do a thing like that."

"What the hell do you know about Andrew?" Vivien said crossly.

"Vivien!" Clinton replied equally crossly. "Will you kindly not swear at me."

There was a pregnant silence.

"I'm sorry," Vivien said at length, grudgingly.

"I'm sorry, too," Clinton murmured. "But I still think we're getting upset about nothing. If only you'd let me show you the rest of the house—you'll adore the drawing room—you'll see things in their proper proportions."

"Proper proportions my foot!" Vivien was angry again. "If you're prepared to accept another man's wife with a pound of tea, I am certainly not prepared to be given away with one."

Clinton sat down, looking glum and helpless. What was he supposed to do? He idly picked up the brown paper in which the packet had been wrapped and suddenly brightened.

"Andrew couldn't have sent the tea," he said. "There are no stamps and no postmark."

Vivien looked at the brown paper and saw that this was true. She also saw that the packet of tea had the name of a local grocer on it.

"He could still have written or telephoned for it," she said.

"Not if he didn't know the address. My love, you see it's all a mistake."

"No!" Vivien said stubbornly. "There is a pound of tea, and we can't get away from it. Clinton, you must ring up the grocer and find out how it was ordered."

"But it's late, my love. I'll do it tomorrow. It will all seem quite different after you've had a good night's rest."

"No." Vivien dug her toes in. "I want to know now."

Clinton gave her a look and without comment went to the telephone.

IT was perhaps four minutes before he came back.

"The tea was ordered by telephone yesterday morning," he announced, "and paid for by postal order today."

"And was it Andrew who ordered it?" she asked.

"It could not possibly have been Andrew."

"Why not?"

"Because it wasn't a man at all. It was a woman."

If Clinton thought he was pouring oil on troubled waters, he was to be highly disappointed. The oil immediately burst into flames.

"A woman!" Vivien jumped to her feet. "That is the last, final straw! He has had a mistress all this time, and she has dared now—"

"Control yourself, please, Vivien!" Clinton said sharply.

"I shall not control myself," she retorted. "I won't stand it. These golfing trips! These fishing holidays! And there was a woman all the time!"

"Well, there's nothing you can do about it, if there was."

"Nothing I can do! I can go and tear her eyes out, can't I?"

"And what good do you think that's going to do?"

"It will do *me* a great deal of good," Vivian said savagely.

Clinton's patience finally snapped. "I see!" he remarked caustically. "And while you are behaving in this common and undignified manner, I suppose you expect me to wait patiently till you have quite finished!"

"Oh, no, I don't," Vivien snapped back. "I'm through with you, too! I have at least learned one thing, and that is that you and Andrew are both equally insupportable. I am now going to spend the night in the village. The only remaining question is whether you drive me there or whether I walk."

In the end he did drive her down; and this time he did not speak a word. Just like Andrew.

VIVIEN returned to London the next afternoon. By train. She was calmer then, and one thing at least was clear. That was that she wanted nothing more to do with Clinton; she was not built to be anyone's prisoner.

It was Andrew himself who opened the door when she rang the bell. He seemed very pleased to see her.

"Darling! How lovely! I wasn't expecting you back till Monday at least."

Vivien avoided his kiss.

"Please come into the drawing room," she said chokingly. "I've got something very important to say."

Andrew followed her, looking, first, rather crestfallen, and then, suddenly, genuinely anxious.

"Vivien, my dear! You haven't been to a doctor or something?"

Vivien was touched for the moment. His sincerity in his regard for her health was quite obvious.

"Andrew," she began, sitting down with great dignity, "I want to know who she is."

"Who who is?" Andrew looked completely blank.

"This woman you have been living with—who dared to send me a pound of tea!"

Andrew stared at her.

"Are you suggesting that I have a mistress, Vivien?"

"Yes."

"But why should I want a mistress when I've got you? I couldn't possibly have been happier than I have with you."

"So happy that you're always leaving me for some reason or another!"

"Well, I do go fishing sometimes." Andrew looked uncomfortable.

"And golfing!"

"And golfing sometimes, too. But I've never looked at another woman all the time we've been married. You must know that's true, Vivien."

Vivien suddenly did know it was

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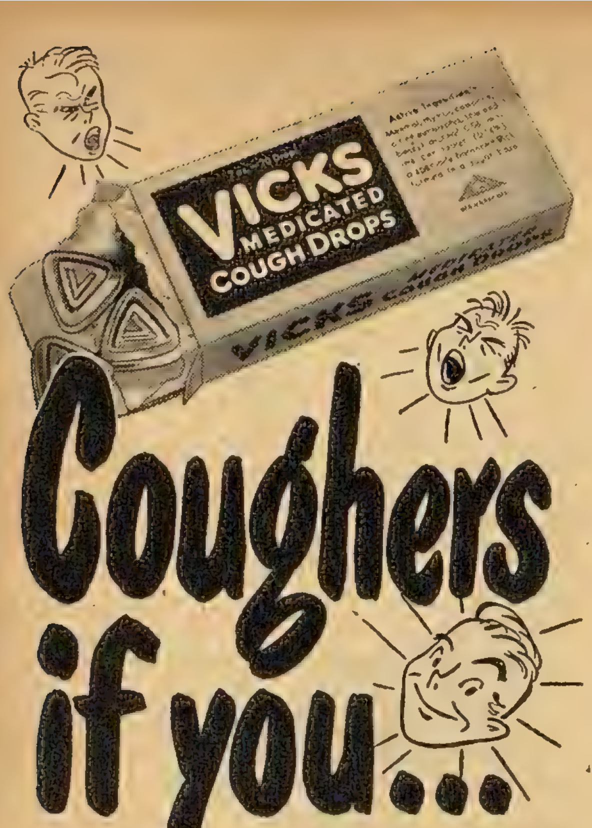

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true. It was palpable, the way he said it. And curiously enough that made her feel more forlorn than ever. Tears came into her eyes.

"Then who the hell was it," she sobbed, "who sent me that tea?"

Andrew saw she was tired and very upset. He got up and mixed her a drink, and then just waited till she was ready to go on.

"I suppose you'd be surprised to learn, Andrew, that I've been thinking of leaving you for another man for some time!"

"Oh Lord!" Andrew said.

"And more surprised still to know that I actually did leave you for the other man yesterday afternoon?"

"Clinton?" Andrew asked miserably.

"Yes, Clinton. He drove me down to his Sussex house. I was going to write to you in a few days and tell you it was all over."

"And—and what happened?"

"Nothing happened, Andrew. A pound of tea intervened."

"I don't quite understand."

"Didn't you say once that you would have been glad to give a certain wife away with a pound of tea?"

"Yes," Andrew was frowning. "But that wasn't you!"

"Then it wasn't you who sent the pound of tea?"

"Of course it wasn't, Vivien!"

"Then it damned well ought to have been!" she flashed back abruptly. "It was the only thing that could have possibly stopped me."

There was a silence. Andrew got up and paced the room.

"Do you think very badly of me?" Vivien asked.

"No, I think very badly of myself," Andrew replied heavily. "You'd never have thought of doing a thing like that unless I had been quite intolerable!"

Vivien dabbed her eyes again.

"Oh, I don't know," she said. "Neglect isn't very warming certainly, but at least it's better than the studied interference which, I see now, is what I would have been in for with Clinton. Oh, Andrew darling, I've had such a narrow escape!"

ANDREW sat down beside her again. He was just taking her hands when there was an interruption. The door opened and Molly came in.

"Oh, mum!" she started. "I didn't know you were back already!"

"The visit was shorter than I expected," Vivien said casually. "Anything the matter, Molly?"

"Well, yes, mum," Molly went on. "It's bad news as well as good. I'm to be married much sooner than we thought. Next week!"

Andrew and Vivien exchanged a glance. The blow was an expected one but none the less severe for that. For Molly was that almost extinct thing known as a "treasure." She had been with Andrew three years before his marriage, and had continued to be the mainstay of the household ever since.

"It's the passage to Canada," Molly went on to explain. "If we don't take the one they're offering us now, it may be months before we get another chance."

"Then of course you must take it," Vivien said. "But you know how we feel about it, don't you? You've been such a part of our married life, we'll miss you horribly."

"You'll find Janet a good girl," Molly replied. She had taken steps to find her own replacement.

"Looks as though you'll have to decide about that wedding present now!" Andrew said.

"I have decided," Molly answered.

"Then what is it to be?"

"I'd like a teapot, sir."

"A teapot?" Vivien repeated.

"Yes, mum," Molly replied, without batting an eyelid. "A nice teapot is a kind of permanent thing."

"Very well, Molly," Vivien ended quickly. "A teapot it shall be!"

Vivien wondered, as Molly went out, whether so much had ever been conveyed in so few words. She glanced at Andrew and saw that he had not tumbled to it at all. But it was quite obvious now. Molly had been present when Andrew made the remark about the pound of tea. Molly did not say much; but she had ears and eyes in her head, and she had always been devoted to Andrew.

VIVIEN looked at Andrew with rather a twisted smile.

"How you Scots do stick together!" she said at last.

"Why do you say that?" Andrew asked.

"Don't you see that it was Molly who sent the pound of tea?"

"Molly!"

"Yes, nobody else could have done it. Nobody else would have thought of it."

"But that's outrageous, Vivien! I can't have that! I must talk to Molly."

Vivien shook her head.

"You won't say a word, Andrew," she said quietly. "Bless her solid Scotch heart!"

She paused a moment, and then went on with a gleam in her eye: "Andrew, you know that silver teapot that belonged to your mother?"

"Yes, dear."

"Well, then?"

"But, Vivien, that's a George the Second. It must be worth a hundred pounds."

"How much am I worth, Andrew?"

"I couldn't name a price, darling."

"Well, then, the hundred pounds will remind you that a woman appreciates a little attention sometimes. And the teapot will remind Molly that a wife has got to take the rough together with the smooth. I think it's a fair deal."

Andrew took her in his arms.

"My darling," he said fervently. "Molly can have the teapot and the sugar basin, the cream jug and all the spoons—so long as I still have you. You just don't know what a horrible fright you gave me!"

THE END

WHAT RUSSIAN CHILDREN ARE TAUGHT

Continued from Page 25

want to continue beyond the seventh grade and through high school must pay a tuition fee of from 200 to 500 rubles a year. Also, textbooks and uniforms for high school are much more expensive than in grade school.

As for college, the annual tuition fee alone is 2,000 rubles, with books, uniforms, etc., taking an almost equal amount. Thus the average Russian worker can't afford higher education for his children. His annual income is only about 5,000 rubles, and besides, if he complies with the wishes of the State, he will have at least six children.

Today higher education in Russia is reserved almost exclusively for the offspring of the new Soviet aristocracy. And since a college education or its equivalent is absolutely essential for the achievement of a better bureaucratic position, the present educational system actually ensures the perpetuation in power of the Communist upper crust. *Sovietskaya vlast* has it all its own way.

As the future Soviet bureaucracy will come from the ranks of high-school and college students, historic events as taught in these schools have particular significance. I have before me a brand-new 1946 textbook edited by Professor A. M. Ponkratova along the lines laid down by the Politburo's propaganda office.

The most interesting part of this textbook is that dealing with events that led up to World War II, and the war itself. The policies of the Soviet government are represented as having been of great wisdom and untainted justice. The Hitler-Stalin pact of 1939 is represented as a positive stroke of Soviet genius; it broke up the capitalistic encirclement engineered by England and France, who directed Nazi aggression against the Soviet Union. "This wise policy of the Soviet government," the chapter concludes, "served to raise the important role played by the Soviet Union in the solution of international problems and its authority in the eyes of the working masses of the whole world."

The final chapter is entitled *The Great Fatherland War of the Soviet People Against Hitler's Germany.* The contributions of the western powers in this struggle are represented as negligible. The North African and Italian campaigns are disposed of in one sentence. Tribute is paid to the Allied invasion of France, but this is immediately counteracted by ascribing the Anglo-American action to the "military successes of the Red Army which drew the strategic reserves of the Germans from the West." Of lend-lease, not a single word. On the contrary, Soviet factories supplied the Red Army with the necessary planes, tanks, and all other equipment. It was also the Soviet state and collective farms which provided the Red Army and the people with the necessary food. Franklin D. Roosevelt is mentioned just once, and then merely as the head of the American delegation at the Teheran meeting. The only non-Russian leader singled out for favorable comment is Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia.

A brief appendix deals with the Soviet invasion of Manchuria and Korea. Here again the Soviet Union is singled out as the victor over a powerful Japan. American participation in the Pacific war is not even mentioned.

Residents of New York will find of particular interest the description of their city in Soviet geography textbooks. "New York is a gigantic city in which the houses of the ruling millionaires are grouped around an artificial creation they call Central Park. The outskirts are full of filthy slums where immigrant workers must live in small crowded dirty houses made of stone or wood. The cost of living is terribly high, especially with one third of the population of this gigantic town habitually unemployed and receiving no help from the bourgeois state."

RUSSIA'S growing generation is being brought up in a spirit of unbridled materialism. The Russian youngster is told that worldly achievement in the interests of the Communist Party, which is the only dispenser of economic security and personal distinction, is all that matters in this life. A future life does not exist except in the nebulous conception of abstract dreamers who are of no use whatsoever in practical life, and therefore it would be outright folly to look forward to anything like that.

Next, the Russian child is being imbued with a spirit of bristling nationalism. The world outside Russia, he is told, is manipulated by capitalistic exploiters and by hypocritical idealists who are in the exploiters' pay. Everything the world in general is benefiting from has come out of Russia. All important inventions that contributed to human progress were made by Russians, but foreign capitalists stole these inventions and exploited them in their own names and for their personal benefit. This happened only because Russians in the past were much too trusting. It is not going to happen ever again.

The Russian child is also taught that the Soviet Union is the only nation in the world that stands for right, justice, and peace. It is the Soviet Union that will lead the world into an era of greater glory, will establish right and justice wherever

* * *

The modern way to have one foot in the grave is to let it rest too heavily on the accelerator!—*Peggy Caroline Fears.*

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rapacious exploitation and grasping hypocrisy now reign unabashed. The capitalistic nations know, of course, that this is going to happen. They are even likely to start a capitalistic war against the Soviet Union in their desperation to escape a fate which they have so richly deserved. But the Soviet Union will triumph.

However, the road to triumph will be a difficult one to travel. It will be full of traps and pitfalls set cunningly by the capitalistic nations. It requires great wisdom to recognize these pitfalls and avoid falling into them. Only Stalin and the Communist Party behind him possess this wisdom. Therefore Stalin and the Communist Party behind him must be believed and obeyed implicitly.

Naturally, in a materialistic-nationalist doctrine of this sort there can be no room for a belief in God, for true Christian principles. The supreme teaching of the Gospel, "Love thy neighbor as thyself," cannot apply. For this reason Russian children today do not receive religious instruction of any kind.

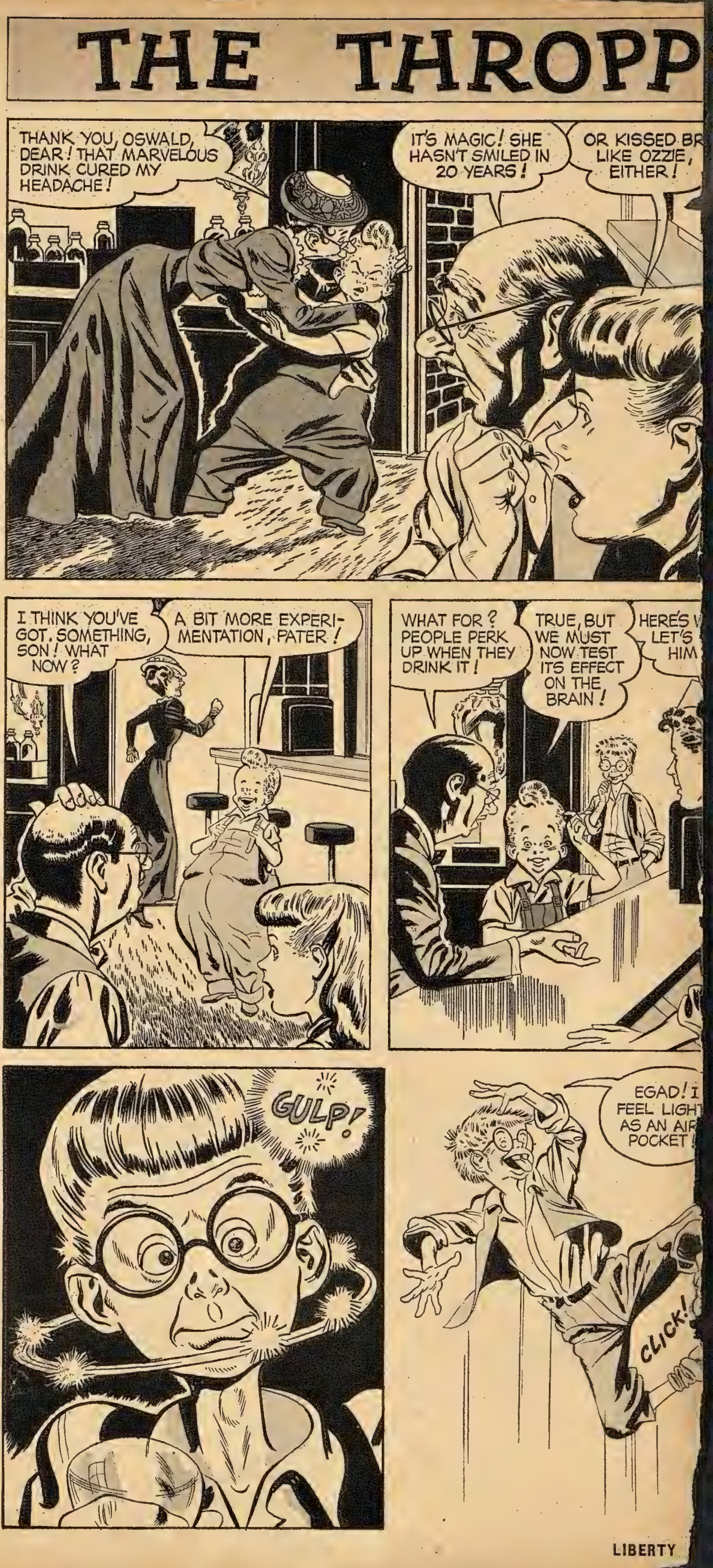
The Soviet Constitution states, "The school is separated from the Church." It also decrees that church buildings are for the purpose of worship only and may under no circumstances be used for religious instruction. When the Communist Party made its peace with the Church in 1943, the question of religious instruction for the young was brought up. The Soviet authorities then declared that parents have the right to teach the Scriptures to their children *at home.* They also have the right to organize in groups of twenty or more, to hire a priest or any other ecclesiastic for giving religious instruction to their children "in premises especially provided for that purpose." But before any such project is started it must first be approved by the *Soviet Office for Church Affairs* or its local representative. A considerable number of such applications were filed. Each was returned with the stereotyped observation: "Due to the housing shortage, no space can be provided now, or in the near future, for purposes not connected with the security of the State." Russian parents have given up.

The attitude of one Russian mother of five to whom I talked is typical. "I suppose it just was fated this way," she said. "Nothing we can do about it." Then, on a somewhat bitter note, she added, "They aren't my children anyway, even though I bore them. They are Stalin's children."

THE END

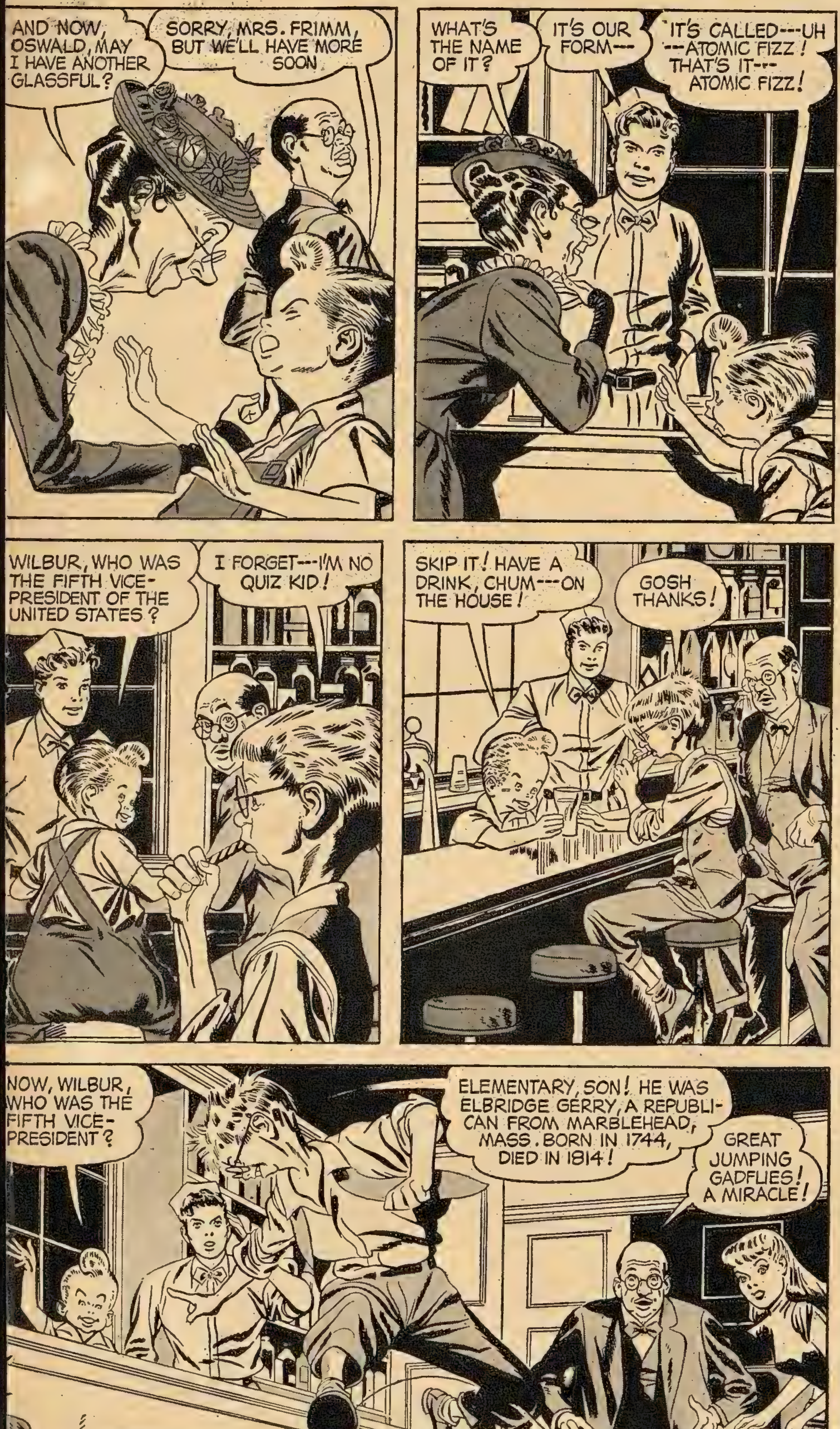
LOST ART?

If the girls don't stop wooing
The way they've been doing,
I'm afraid men will soon lose
The art of pursuing.
—*Vera Hough Sullivan.*


THE THROPP
THANK YOU, OSWALD, DEAR! THAT MARVELOUS DRINK CURED MY HEADACHE!
IT'S MAGIC! SHE HASN'T SMILED IN 20 YEARS!
OR KISSED BR LIKE OZZIE, EITHER!
I THINK YOU'VE GOT, SOMETHING, SON! WHAT NOW?
A BIT MORE EXPERIMENTATION, PATER!
WHAT FOR? PEOPLE PERK UP WHEN THEY DRINK IT!
TRUE, BUT WE MUST NOW TEST ITS EFFECT ON THE BRAIN!
HERE'S W LET'S HIM
GULP!
EGAD! I FEEL LIGH AS AN AIR POCKET!
CLICK!

FAMILY

Written by **LAWRENCE LARIAR**
Illustrated by **DONLOU**


AND NOW, OSWALD, MAY I HAVE ANOTHER GLASSFUL?
SORRY, MRS. FRIMM, BUT WE'LL HAVE MORE SOON
WHAT'S THE NAME OF IT?
IT'S OUR FORM---
IT'S CALLED---UH ---ATOMIC FIZZ! THAT'S IT--- ATOMIC FIZZ!
WILBUR, WHO WAS THE FIFTH VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES?
I FORGET---I'M NO QUIZ KID!
SKIP IT! HAVE A DRINK, CHUM---ON THE HOUSE!
GOSH THANKS!
NOW, WILBUR, WHO WAS THE FIFTH VICE-PRESIDENT?
ELEMENTARY, SON! HE WAS ELBRIDGE GERRY, A REPUBLICAN FROM MARBLEHEAD, MASS. BORN IN 1744, DIED IN 1814!
GREAT JUMPING GADFLIES! A MIRACLE!

Continued next week

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CECIL JOHNSON

"Now, don't forget to stay fairly close to the group during the tour, folks."
LIBERTY

THE BULL MARKET IN BEARS

Continued from Page 19

keeping out of sight. His marvelous senses of smell and hearing generally keep him informed well in advance of the approach of man. In October and early November, however, competition for food dulls bears' caution somewhat. They congregate on oak and beechnut ridges, in apple orchards, and around woods camps and sporting lodges, where they raid the garbage pails, and a hunter who has followed the trails for days without success may suddenly hit the jackpot in no uncertain manner.

THE ordinary city dweller's conception of a black bear is of a ferocious animal standing upright, its forelegs extended, ready to clasp the unfortunate human in a murderous embrace. Actually, the black bear's occasional contacts with humans usually scare the living daylight out of him.

Up around Phillips there is a bear that probably still shivers over an encounter it had three years ago.

Russell Richmond was out in the woods hunting rabbits with a .22 rifle when he ran across the animal. A .22 is hardly the rifle for such game, but Richmond took a pot shot anyway. The light pellet had little effect on the bear other than to awaken in him a fervent desire to get the heck away from there.

Galloping along a woods road, the bear topped a hill, only to come face to face with a small boy coming up the other side. Both were shaken mightily by the encounter. Emitting howls of pure horror, they turned tail and started putting as much distance as possible between them. This retreat—or reretreat—of the bear put him within range of Richmond's rifle again, and he received another volley. But by that time the poor bear was probably just too busy to die. At any rate, he was just a black blur of velocity the last Richmond saw of him.

Last year another small boy fell asleep in a field near his home, and was awakened by a bear gently nibbling at one of his shoes. As the boy ran howling for the house, the bear, almost frightened out of his skin, climbed the nearest tree. In a minute or so the boy's seventy-year-old grandmother arrived on the scene with an angry glint in her eye and a .22 rifle in her hands. A well-directed shot taught the unfortunate bear that it didn't pay to mess around with granny's favorite.

No one in Maine has ever known of any instance of a wild black bear attacking a human being. And, contrary to general belief, a mother bear will not always defend her cubs. Maine game wardens are careful never to handle a cub they find in the woods. If they should, the mother bear would not go near it as long as the man-scent remained.

Although the black bear is congenitally shy, he has an infinite capacity for getting into trouble with people who live in or on the edge of woods. These people—woodsmen, guides, trappers, and farmers—endow him with the characteristics of a Peck's Bad Boy.

This belief that the bear is something like an unbearably mischievous kid from the wrong side of the tracks was never better illustrated than in an incident that occurred back of Ashland.

Two trappers worked themselves into a high degree of exasperation after having had their cabin raided by a bear every time they were out tending their trap lines. The bear seemed to have a keen, if perverted, sense of humor. He would tip over the stove, wreck the furniture, and scatter what provisions he couldn't eat.

Enough being enough, the trappers decided to teach the marauder a lesson. One morning they departed as usual, but one circled around and took up his vigil back of a tree. Sure enough, the raider soon appeared in the clearing and, after a little reconnaissance work, disappeared into the cabin. Cautiously making his way to the door, the trapper inserted his rifle and pulled the trigger. A deafening roar greeted the explosion and for a few minutes the little cabin shook as though a cyclone were locked inside. Almost as suddenly as it began, the racket stopped. Peering in, the trapper saw that the bear was very dead indeed. The cabin was an unholy mess. Gore covered almost every inch of the floor, walls, and ceiling. The cooking utensils had ceased to exist as such, and you could have picked your teeth with the biggest piece of furniture left.

SOON afterward the trapper's companion returned and gazed at the wreckage with awe. In short order, however, his awe turned to anger.

"Why," he asked his companion furiously, "didn't you shoot the danged bear outside, before he raised Cain with our cabin?"

"Bill!" exclaimed the bear's conqueror in amazement. "If I done that, how in hell would he knowed what I was shooting him for?"

Proponents of the belief that bears know the score at all times point to the experience of Guy Berry and his family at The Forks, up near the Canadian border. Three years ago, when rationing was at its height, the Berrys saved up their meat and butter points so that they could lay in food for winter, a good old Maine custom. By rigid economy they were able to gather enough of the precious points for six pounds of butter, the same amount of salt pork, and five pounds of bacon, all of which were placed in a storehouse bulging with other edible provisions.

The Berrys surveying the results of their self-denial and forehandedness with pride, settled down for a comfortable winter. Then, one night, three bears broke into their storehouse. Ignoring all the unrationed items, those bears made off with the butter, bacon, and salt pork, leaving the Berrys in a rage and a great quandry. Happily, the local members of the OPA, some of whom had had bear trouble themselves, issued additional points to the raided family. Thus everyone was satisfied, particularly the bears.

The average black bear weighs about 300 pounds, although there is a record of a huge one being taken that weighed over 900 pounds. Pound for pound, woodsmen believe him to be the strongest animal in the world. One of his chief weapons is a devastating poke with either front paw, a poke that is delivered with awe-inspiring power and speed. A woods cook will hack away with an ax for many minutes at the stout oak head of a barrel of salt pork. Any bear can cave it in with one pulverizing blow—and does, if he gets the chance. He can easily break the back of a moose with one stroke. And the speed of his strike makes a Joe Louis jab look snail-like by comparison. A few years ago a child eating an ice-cream cone stood watching a chained bear at the Boston Sportsman's Show. Without seeming to notice the youngster at all, the bear made one lightninglike move, and the cone popped into his mouth. It was all done so quickly that the unharmed child stared incredulously at the place where the cone had been. As a now-you-see-it-now-you-don't act, it was worth going miles to see.

Maine farmers tell many stories about the prodigious strength of bruin, and at least one such tale has ample substantiation. Last year a 300-pound bear crawled through a barn window placed five feet from the ground, killed a 400-pound hog penned inside, picked the animal up and shoved it through the window. Crawling out after its prey, the marauder grasped it in a bear hug and, standing erect, started to run away with it. All this ruckus aroused the farmer, whose rifle shot ended the bear's end run on what would have been about the forty-yard line.

At least one bear has found out that it doesn't pay to emulate a heavyweight boxer. A lone trapper, knowing bruin's fondness for sweets and hoping to avoid having his cabin raided, suspended his heavy molasses jug from the limb of a tree by a length of wire. It wasn't long before Mr. Bear came around. He stood on his hind legs to view the strange object at close range. Then, after talking a little bear talk to himself, he hit the jug an experimental tap. It swung forward a few feet and, obedient to the law of gravity, returned to its former position. Unfortunately, the bear's tender nose was then occupying that position, and the jug hit it a resounding thump that knocked the surprised animal back on his haunches.

With a roar of rage, the bear raised to his full height, wound up and let go his Sunday punch. This time the jug made a complete circle up and over the branch and came down on the back of the bear's head with a clunk that could have been heard two blocks away, knocking the champion colder than ten dollars' worth of ice cubes. On regaining consciousness, he shook the cobwebs out of his head and crawled off into the woods. The trapper had his rifle in his hands but couldn't shoot. He was laughing too hard.

Despite his seeming awkwardness, a bear can move through the woods with the grace of a cat and a lot faster. Last fall a rural mail carrier came across a halfgrown bear in the road near the town of Gilead. At the blast of the horn, the surprised animal tore ahead, with the car in hot pursuit. At forty miles an hour the bear was doing a little better than holding his own.

An omnivorous animal, the bear will eat just about anything—tender roots, green things, berries. He has a particular passion for ants and other insects, and will spend hours extracting them from logs, stumps, and from under rocks. His sweet tooth is of alarming proportions. He will raid a bee tree and devour honey while howling in mortal agony from the stings of the bees. Unfortunately, he also has a passion for pork and mutton, the weakness that gets him into such difficulties with Maine farmers.

A CREATURE of contradictions on many points, the bear is not gregarious even though he seems to enjoy a bit of horseplay as well as the next fellow. In June he finds a female to his liking and the two depart on a week's honeymoon. After that he leaves her, and they see no more of each other. In October and November, when bear hunting is generally the best, he will be found stuffing acorns and beechnuts with his fellows. But other than that, he goes his lonely way.

Guides argue as to whether the bear is the smartest or dumbest of animals. One school points to his almost human ability to size up a situation quickly and act with amazing intelligence. Others point to the fact that the bear is one of the easiest of all animals to trap. As a clincher, those who believe the bear to be one of the wisest of all living things will get around sooner or later to telling of a bear who broke into a slaughterhouse at night one fall. He walked right past a number of carcasses of sheep, hogs, and beef animals until he came upon what he was looking for—a pile of sheepskins with the wool still intact. Gathering up an armful, he disappeared into the night. Tracked to his den the next day, he was found snoring, luxuriously wrapped from head to foot in his stolen sheepskins. He realized that a cold winter was in prospect and he had protected himself accordingly. You can take that one or leave it. I left it, but not without reluctance.

THE END

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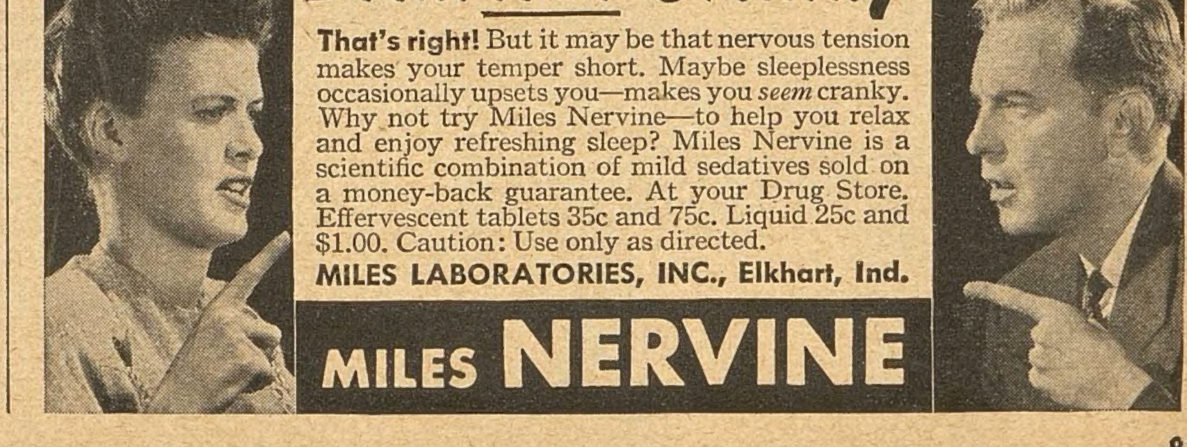

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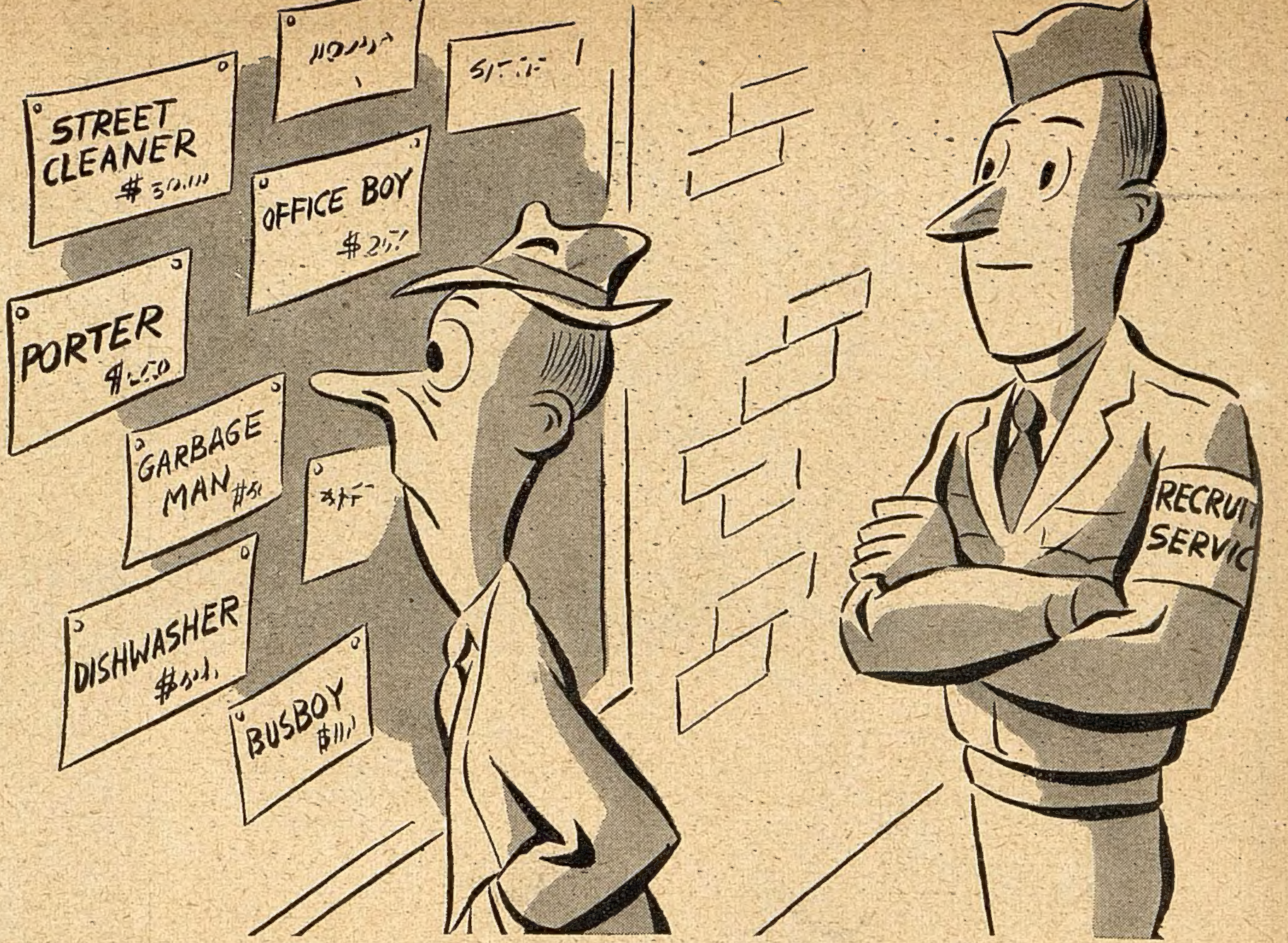


TODAY'S BEST JOB OFFERING

TAKING it all in all, a career in Uncle Sam's army offers the nearest thing to sure-fire success to be found these days. Growing numbers of young Americans are making this discovery and acting accordingly.

The objective of our peacetime army is a volunteer force of 1,070,000 select men who are able physically and mentally to master the complicated technical problems of a modern military organization. Just any Tom, Dick, or Harry won't do. The men accepted must be good, and the army knows that talent costs money. Accordingly the pay scales compare more than favorably with those currently offered in private enterprise. A buck private gets $75 a month to start; but when free food, clothing, medical care, and other benefits and allowances are added, his minimum monthly pay equals $150 if single; if married, about $210. Furthermore, the soldier is assured of automatic promotion. If he sticks with the career, he will progress regularly to higher rank and pay. As a married master sergeant with one child he will find himself drawing the equivalent of almost $500 a month. On top of these financial advantages the soldier acquires education steadily, both book learning and technical skill. He gets thirty days off a year and this accrues when he can't take it. A month's vacation every year is still only a hoped-for mirage to us civilians.

From a standpoint of job security, a highly prized factor these days, the soldier is in a class by himself. His job is certain for as long as he wants to hold it. After twenty years he can retire on a pension amounting to half his monthly pay at the time of retirement. After thirty years' service, his pension is three fourths of his monthly pay. A master sergeant—and in thirty years' time a man can easily make it—is in the enviable position of drawing $185.63 a month for the rest of his life. He can take another job after he retires and still keep drawing the pension. Few jobs in private industry offer anywhere near the pension advantages Uncle Sam gives his volunteers.

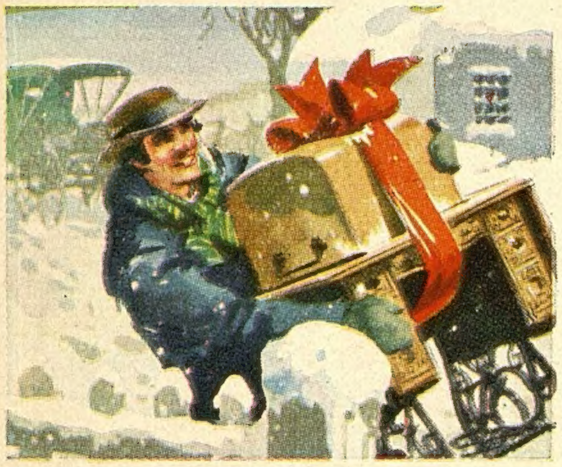
As to the disadvantages, some young men are inclined to feel that army life is restricting. They are under orders; they must obey. They are not their own masters, This is more apparent than real. Actually, the same restrictions hold true in any walk of life. We are all under the necessity of making a living and must conform to the rules of the job or else we get in trouble. In most respects a soldier is under no more discipline than any of the rest of us. He does his job to the best of his ability and that's all that's required. He can move from place to place. In fact, his chances of doing so are much greater than those of a civilian. He can marry, raise children, and have a home life with even greater assurance. His family will never suffer want, hunger, or lack of medical care.

All in all, army life ain't what it used to be. "Hup, two, three, four," has given way to activity of a highly technical and more interesting nature. A soldier's day in the modern army is far from boring. He's got an exciting job at premium pay with maximum security. His uniform is a badge of skill, intelligence, and substantiality. No wonder the army can afford to be choosy about the men it hires.

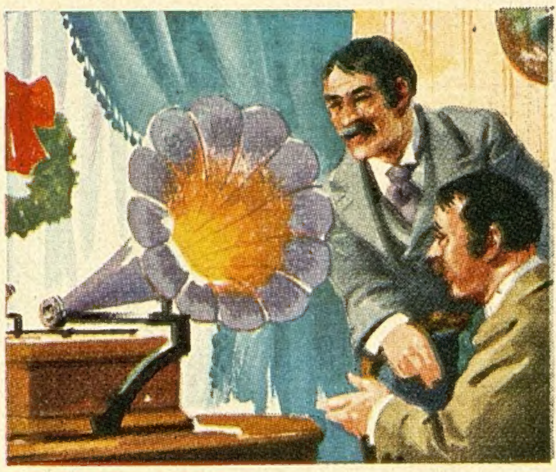
Paul Hunter

Liberty
...THE PRESERVATION OF FREEDOM IS THIS MAGAZINE'S PURPOSE

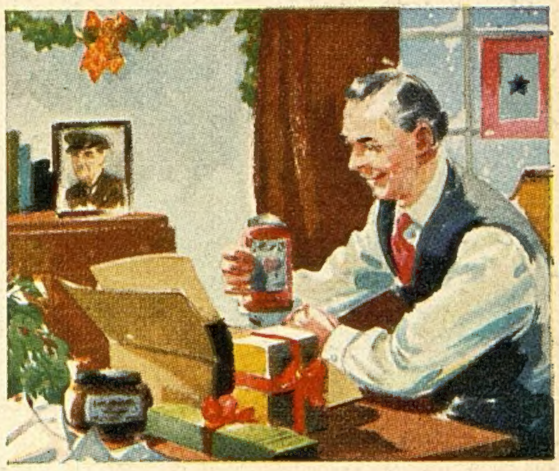
How to be a Christmas Hero



1868 **Christmas heroes** have to be resourceful. Great grandfather, for instance, could get by very nicely with an ornate sewing machine which cost $25.00. Great grandmother was fascinated by this mechanical marvel, ten years after the name Corby's came to Canada.



1898 **While Dewey was** taking Manila, Grandfather shopped for a machine that talked and sang. Gramophones sold for $10.00. The man who gave one for Christmas was considered smart and modern on Corby's 40th Anniversary as a grand old Canadian name.



1943 **The true spirit** of Christmas giving came closer to the hearts of people in 1943 than ever before. Millions were overseas and shipments to them were limited. Shelves were bare in many stores before Christmas on this 85th year of Corby's fame as a grand old Canadian name.

SAY CORBYS
CORBY'S
Reserve
N. Corby
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JAS. BARCLAY & CO. LIMITED
PEORIA ILLINOIS
Merry Christmas

1946 **This year** Americans will find more merchandise on store shelves than ever before. Millions will be spent on gifts that will help make this the gayest Christmas in years. *And if you've a name on your list that calls for a special gift,* you can set yourself up as a Christmas hero by remembering Corby's . . . the light, sociable whiskey with the grand old Canadian name. Corby's "does something" for 'most any Holiday drink.

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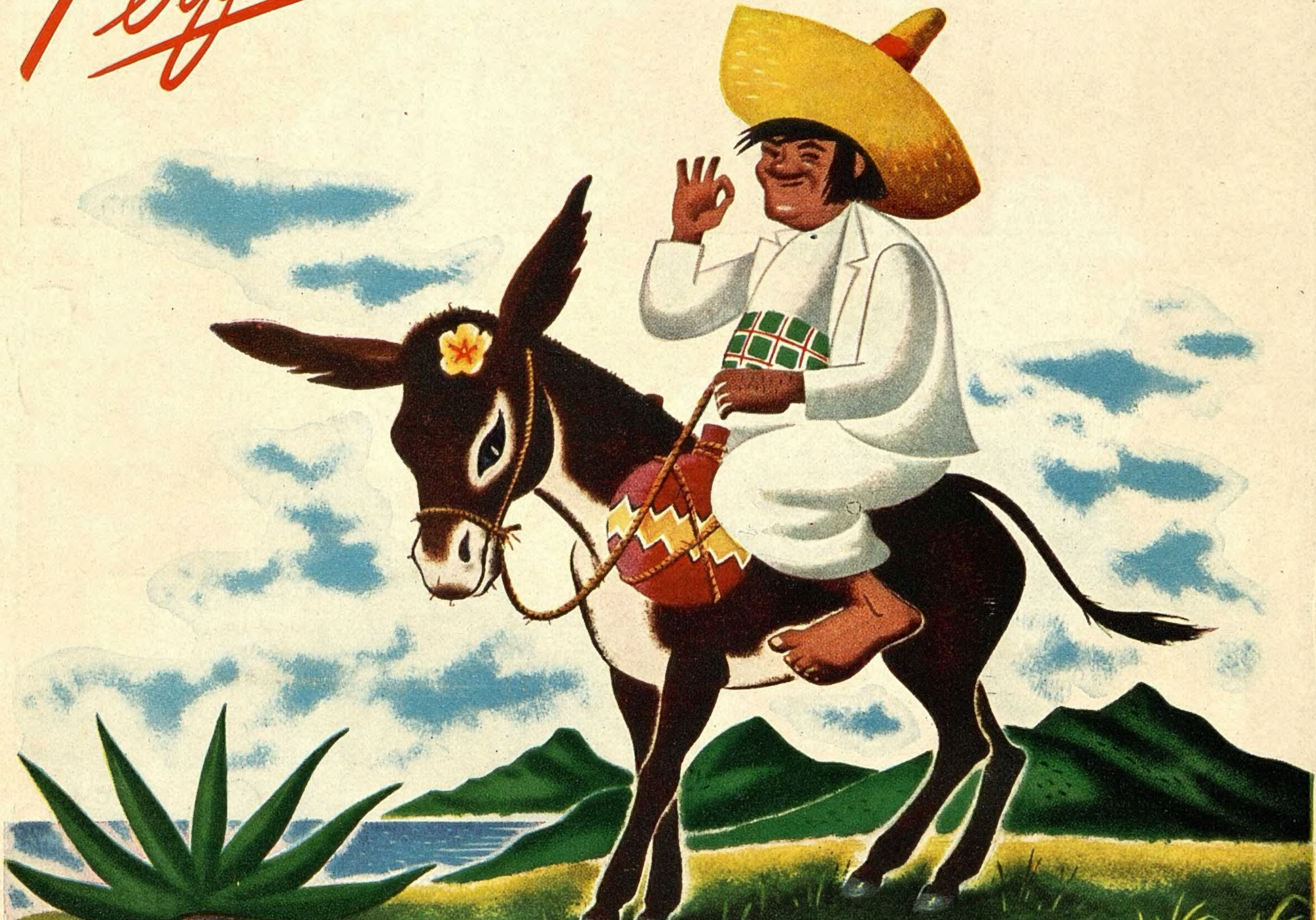

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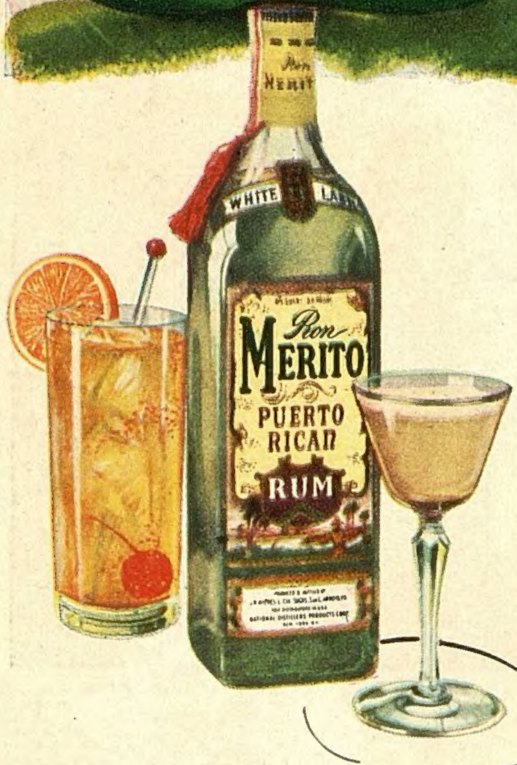

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